THE

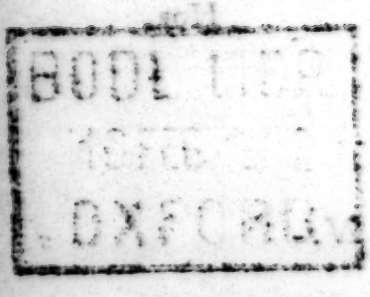
RAMBLER.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magiſtri,
Quo me cunque rapit tempeſtas, deferor hoſpes.
HOR.

LONDON:

Printed for J. PAYNE and J. BOUQUET,
IN PATER-NOSTER-ROW.
M.DCC.LII.



THE RAMBLER.

NUMB. 101. TUESDAY, *March* 5, 1751.

Mella jubes Hyblæa tibi vel Hymettia naſci,
Et thyma Cecropiæ Corſica ponis api.
MART.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

HAVING by ſeveral years of continual ſtudy treaſured in my mind a great number of principles and ideas, and obtained by frequent exerciſe the power of applying them with propriety, and combining them with readineſs, I reſolved to

quit the univerſity, where I conſidered myſelf as a gem hidden in the mine, and to mingle in the croud of publick life. I was naturally attracted by the company of thoſe who were of the ſame age with myſelf, and finding that my academical gravity contributed very little to my reputation, applied my faculties to jocularity and burleſque. Thus, in a ſhort time, I had heated my imagination to ſuch a ſtate of activity and ebullition, that upon every occaſion it fumed away in burſts of wit, and evaporations of gaiety. I became on a ſudden the idol of the coffee-houſe, was in one winter ſollicited to accept the preſidentſhip of five clubs, was dragged by violence to every new play, and quoted in every controverſy upon theatrical merit; was in every publick place ſurrounded by a multitude of humble auditors, who retailed in other places of reſort my maxims and my jeſts, and was boaſted as their intimate and companion by many, who had no other pretenſions to my acquaintance, than that they had drank chocolate in the ſame room.

You will not wonder, Mr. Rambler, that I mention my ſucceſs with ſome appearance

pearance of triumph and elevation. Perhaps no kind of ſuperiority is more flattering or alluring than that which is conferred by the powers of converſation, by extemporaneous ſprightlineſs of fancy, copiouſneſs of language, and fertility of ſentiment. In other exertions of genius, the greateſt part of the praiſe is unknown and unenjoyed; the writer, indeed, ſpreads his reputation to a wider extent, but receives little pleaſure or advantage from the diffuſion of his name, and only obtains a kind of nominal ſovereignty over regions which pay no tribute. The colloquial wit has always his own radiance reflected on himſelf, and enjoys all the pleaſure which he beſtows; he finds his power confeſſed by every one that approaches him, ſees friendſhip kindling with rapture, and attention ſwelling into praiſe.

The deſire which every man feels of importance and eſteem is ſo much gratified by finding an aſſembly, at his entrance, brightened with gladneſs and huſhed with expectation, that the recollection of ſuch diſtinctions can ſcarcely fail to be pleaſing whenſoever it is innocent. And my conſcience does not re-

proach me with any mean or criminal effects of vanity; ſince I always employed my influence on the ſide of virtue, and never ſacrificed my underſtanding or my religion to the pleaſure of applauſe.

THERE were many whom either the deſire of enjoying my pleaſantry, or the pride of being thought to enjoy it, brought often into my company; but I was careſſed in a particular manner by *Demochares*, a gentleman of a large eſtate, and a liberal diſpoſition. My fortune was by no means exuberant, and therefore I was not diſpleaſed with a friend who was willing to be entertained at his own charge. I became by daily invitations habituated to his table, and, as he had perſuaded himſelf to believe my acquaintance neceſſary to the character of elegance, which he was deſirous of eſtabliſhing, I lived in all the luxury of affluence without expence or dependence, and paſſed my life in a perpetual reciprocation of pleaſure with men whom ſimilitude of accompliſhments or deſire of improvement crouded about us.

BUT all power has its ſphere of activity, beyond which it produces no effect. *Demochares*

chares being called by his affairs into the country, imagined that he ſhould encreaſe his reputation and popularity by coming among his neighbours accompanied by a man whoſe abilities were ſo generally allowed. The report preſently ſpread thro' half the county that *Demochares* was arrived, and had brought with him the celebrated *Hilarius*, by whom ſuch merriment would be excited, as had never been enjoyed or conceived before. I knew, indeed, the purpoſe for which I was invited, and, as men do not look diligently out for poſſible miſcarriages, was pleaſed to find myſelf courted upon principles of intereſt, and conſidered as capable of reconciling factions, compoſing feuds, and uniting a whole province in ſocial happineſs.

AFTER a few days ſpent in adjuſting his domeſtick regulations, *Demochares* invited all the gentlemen of his neighbourhood to dinner, and did not forget to hint how much my preſence was expected to heighten the pleaſure of the feaſt. He informed me what prejudices my reputation had raiſed in my favour, and repreſented the ſatisfaction with which he ſhould ſee me kindle up the blaze

of merriment, and ſhould remark the various effects that my fire would have upon ſuch diverſity of matter.

THIS declaration, by which he intended to quicken my vivacity, filled me with ſolicitude. I felt an ambition of ſhining, which I never knew before; and was therefore embarraſſed with an unuſual fear of diſgrace. I paſſed the night in planning out to myſelf the converſation of the coming day; recollected all my topicks of raillery, propoſed proper ſubjects of ridicule, prepared ſmart replies to a thouſand queſtions, accommodated anſwers to imaginary repartees, and formed a magazine of remarks, apophthegms, tales, and illuſtrations.

THE morning broke at laſt in the midſt of theſe buſy meditations. I roſe with the palpitations of a champion on the day of combat; and, notwithſtanding all my efforts, found my ſpirits ſunk under the weight of expectation. The company ſoon after began to drop in, and every one, at his entrance, was introduced to *Hilarius*. What conception the inhabitants of this region had formed

of

of a wit, I cannot yet diſcover, but obſerved that they all ſeemed after the regular exchange of compliments to turn away diſappointed, and that while we waited for dinner, they caſt their eyes firſt upon me, and then upon each other, like a theatrical aſſembly waiting for a ſhew.

FROM the uneaſineſs of this ſituation, I was relieved by the dinner, and as every attention was taken up by the buſineſs of the hour, I ſunk quietly to a level with the reſt of the company. But no ſooner were the diſhes removed, than inſtead of chearful confidence and familiar prattle, an univerſal ſilence again ſhewed their expectation of ſome unuſual performane. My friend endeavoured to rouſe them by healths and queſtions, but they anſwered him with great brevity, and immediately relapſed into their former taciturnity.

I HAD waited in hope of ſome opportunity to divert them, but could find no paſs opened for a ſingle ſally; and who can be merry without an object of mirth? After a few faint efforts, which produced neither ap-

plauſe nor oppoſition, I was content to mingle with the maſs, to put round the glaſs in ſilence, and ſolace myſelf with my own contemplations.

My friend looked round him; the gueſts ſtared at one another; and if now and then a few ſyllables were uttered with timidity and heſitation, there was none ready to make any reply. All our faculties were frozen, and every minute took away from our capacity of pleaſing, and diſpoſition to be pleaſed. Thus paſſed the hours to which ſo much happineſs was decreed; the hours which had, by a kind of open proclamation, been devoted to wit, to mirth, and to *Hilarius*.

At laſt the night came on, and the neceſſity of parting freed us from the perſecutions of each other. I heard them as they walked along the court murmuring at the loſs of the day, and enquiring whether any man would pay a ſecond viſit to a houſe haunted by a wit.

Demochares, whoſe Benevolence is greater than his penetration, having flattered his hopes with the ſecondary honour which he

was

was to gain by my ſprightlineſs and elegance, and the affection with which he ſhould be followed for a perpetual banquet of gaiety, was not able to conceal his vexation and reſentment, nor would eaſily be perſuaded but that I had ſacrificed his intereſt to ſullenneſs and caprice, had ſtudiouſly endeavoured to diſguſt his gueſts, and ſuppreſſed my powers of delighting, in obſtinate and premeditated ſilence. I am informed that the reproach of their ill reception is divided by the gentlemen of the country between us; ſome being of opinion that my friend is deluded by an impoſtor, who, though he has found ſome art of gaining his favour, is afraid to ſpeak before men of more penetration; and others concluding that I think only *London* the proper theatre of my abilities, and diſdain to exert my genius for the praiſe of ruſticks.

I BELIEVE, Mr. RAMBLER, that it has ſometimes happened to others, who have the good or ill fortune to be celebrated for wits, to fall under the ſame cenſures upon the like occaſions. I hope therefore that you will prevent any miſrepreſentations of ſuch failures, by remarking that invention is not wholly at

the command of its poſſeſſor; that the power of pleaſing is very often obſtructed by the deſire; that all expectation leſſens ſurprize, yet ſome ſurprize is neceſſary to gaiety; and that thoſe who deſire to partake of the pleaſure of wit muſt contribute to its production, ſince the mind ſtagnates without external ventilation, and that effervescence of the fancy, which flaſhes into tranſport, can be raſed only by the infuſion of diſſimilar ideas.

NUMB. 102. SATURDAY, *March* 9, 1751.

Ipſa quoque aſſiduo labuntur tempora motu
Non ſecus ac flumen: neque enim conſiſtere flumen,
Nec levis hora poteſt; ſed ut unda impellitur undâ,
Urgeturque prior veniente, urgetque priorem,
Tempora ſic fugiunt pariter, pariterque ſequuntur.

OVID.

"LIFE," ſays *Seneca*, "is a voyage, in "the progreſs of which, we are perpe- "tually changing our ſcenes; we firſt leave "childhood behind us, then youth, then the "years

"years of ripened manhood, then the better "and more pleaſing part of old age." The peruſal of this paſſage, having excited in me a train of reflections on the ſtate of man, the inceſſant fluctuation of his wiſhes, the gradual change of his diſpoſition to all external objects, and the thoughtleſneſs with which he floats along the ſtream of time, I ſunk into a ſlumber amidſt my meditations, and, on a ſudden, found my ears filled with the tumult of labour, the ſhouts of alacrity, the ſhrieks of alarm, the whiſtle of winds, and the daſh of waters.

My aſtoniſhment for a time repreſſed my curioſity; but ſoon recovering myſelf ſo far as to enquire whither we were going, and what was the cauſe of ſuch clamour and confuſion, I was told that they were launching out into the *ocean of life*; that we had already paſſed the ſtreights of infancy, in which multitudes had periſhed, ſome by the weakneſs and fragility of their veſſels, and more by the folly, perverſeneſs, or negligence, of thoſe who undertook to ſteer them; and that we were now on the main ſea, abandoned to the winds and billows, without any other means

of ſecurity, than the care of the pilot, whom it was always in our power to chooſe among great numbers that offered their direction and aſſiſtance.

I THEN looked round with anxious eagerneſs: and firſt turning my eyes behind me, ſaw a ſtream flowing through flowery iſlands, which every one that ſailed along ſeemed to behold with pleaſure; but no ſooner touched, than the current, which, though not noiſy or turbulent, was yet irreſiſtible, bore him away. Beyond theſe iſlands all was darkneſs, nor could any of the paſſengers deſcribe the ſhore at which he firſt embarked.

BEFORE me, and each other ſide, was an expanſe of waters violently agitated, and covered with ſo thick a miſt, that the moſt perſpicacious eye could ſee but a little way. It appeared to be full of rocks and whirlpools, for many ſunk unexpectedly while they were courting the gale with full ſails, and inſulting thoſe whom they had left behind. So numerous, indeed, were the dangers, and ſo thick the darkneſs, that no caution could confer ſecurity. Yet there were many, who, by

by falſe intelligence, betrayed their followers into whirlpools, or by violence puſhed thoſe whom they found in their way againſt the rocks.

THE current was invariable and inſurmountable; but though it was impoſſible to ſail againſt it, or to return to the place that was once paſſed, yet it was not ſo violent as to allow no opportunities for dexterity or courage, ſince, though none could retreat back from danger, yet they might often avoid it by oblique direction.

IT was, however, not very common to ſteer with much care or prudence; for, by ſome univerſal infatuation, every man appeared to think himſelf ſafe, though he ſaw his conſorts every moment ſinking round him; and no ſooner had the waves cloſed over them, than their fate and their miſconduct were forgotten; the voyage was perſued with the ſame jocund confidence; every man congratulated himſelf upon the ſoundneſs of his veſſel, and believed himſelf able to ſtem the whirlpool in which his friend was ſwallowed, or glide over the rocks on which he was daſhed;

diſhed; nor was it often obſerved that the ſight of a wreck made any man change his courſe; if he turned aſide for a moment, he ſoon forgot the rudder, and left himſelf again to the diſpoſal of chance.

THIS negligence did not proceed from indifference, or from wearineſs of their preſent condition; for not one of thoſe, who thus ruſhed upon deſtruction, failed, when he was ſinking, to call loudly upon his aſſociates for that help which could not now be given him; and many ſpent their laſt moments in cautioning others againſt the folly, by which they were intercepted in the midſt of their courſe. Their benevolence was ſometimes praiſed, but their admonitions were unregarded.

THE veſſels, in which we had embarked, being confeſſedly unequal to the turbulence of the ſtream of life, were viſibly impaired in the courſe of the voyage; ſo that every paſſenger was certain, that how long ſoever he might, by favourable accidents, or by inceſſant vigilance, be preſerved, he muſt ſink at laſt.

THIS neceſſity of periſhing might have been expected

expected to ſadden the gay, and intimidate the daring, at leaſt to keep the melancholy and timorous in perpetual torments, and hinder them from any enjoyment of the varieties and gratifications which nature offered them as the ſolace of their labours; yet in effect none ſeemed leſs to expect deſtruction than thoſe to whom it was moſt dreadful; they all had the art of concealing their danger from themſelves; and thoſe who knew their inability to bear the ſight of the terrors that embarraſſed their way, took care never to look forward, but found ſome amuſement for the preſent moment, and generally entertained themſelves by playing with HOPE, who was the conſtant aſſociate of the voyage of life.

YET all that HOPE ventured to promiſe, even to thoſe whom ſhe favoured moſt, was, not that they ſhould eſcape, but that they ſhould ſink laſt; and with this promiſe every one was ſatisfied, though he laughed at the reſt for ſeeming to believe it. HOPE, indeed, apparently mocked the credulity of her companions; for in proportion as their veſſels grew leaky, ſhe redoubled her aſſurances of

ſafety; and none were more buſy in making proviſions for a long voyage, than they, whom all but themſelves ſaw likely to periſh ſoon by irreparable decay.

In the midſt of the current of life was the *gulph of* Intemperance, a dreadful whirlpool, interſperſed with rocks, of which the pointed crags were concealed under water, and the tops covered with herbage, on which Ease ſpread couches of repoſe, and with ſhades, where Pleasure warbled the ſong of invitation. Within ſight of theſe rocks all who ſailed on the ocean of life muſt neceſſarily paſs. Reason, indeed, was always at hand to ſteer the paſſengers through a narrow outlet by which they might eſcape; but very few could, by her intreaties or remonſtrances, be induced to put the rudder into her hand, without ſtipulating that ſhe ſhould approach ſo near unto the rocks of Pleasure, that they might ſolace themſelves with a ſhort enjoyment of that delicious region, after which they always determined to perſue their courſe without any other deviation.

Reason was too often prevailed upon ſo far

far by theſe promiſes, as to venture her charge within the eddy of the gulph of INTEMPERANCE, where, indeed, the circumvolution was weak, but yet interrupted the courſe of the veſſel, and drew it, by inſenſible rotations, towards the centre. She then repented her temerity, and with all her force endeavoured to retreat; but the draught of the gulph was generally too ſtrong to be overcome; and the paſſenger, having danced in circles with a pleaſing and giddy velocity, was at laſt overwhelmed and loſt. Thoſe few whom REASON was able to extricate, generally ſuffered ſo many ſhocks upon the poſnts which ſhot out from the rocks of PLEASURE, that they were unable to continue their courſe with the ſame ſtrength and facility as before, but floated along timorouſly and feebly, endangered by every breeze, and ſhattered by every ruffle of the water, till they ſunk, by ſlow degrees, after long ſtruggles, and innumerable expedients, always repining at their own folly, and warning others againſt the firſt approach to the gulph of INTEMPERANCE.

THERE were artiſts who profeſſed to repair

pair the breaches and ſtop the leaks of the veſſels which had been ſhattered on the rocks of PLEASURE. Many appeared to have great confidence in their ſkill, and ſome, indeed, were preſerved by it from ſinking, who had received only a ſingle blow; but I remarked that few veſſels laſted long which had been much repaired, nor was it found that the artiſts themſelves continued afloat longer than thoſe who had leaſt of their aſſiſtance.

THE only advantage, which, in the voyage of life, the cautious had above the negligent, was, that they ſunk later, and more ſuddenly; for they paſſed forward till they had ſometimes ſeen all thoſe in whoſe company they had iſſued from the ſtreights of infancy, periſh in the way, and at laſt were overſet by a croſs breeze, without the toil of reſiſtance, or the anguiſh of expectation. But ſuch as had often fallen againſt the rocks of PLEASURE, commonly ſubſided by ſenſible degrees, contended long with the encroaching waters, and haraſſed themſelves by labours that ſcarce HOPE herſelf could flatter with ſucceſs.

As

As I was looking upon the various fate of the multitude about me, I was ſuddenly alarmed with an admonition from ſome unknown Power, "Gaze not idly upon others "when thou thyſelf art ſinking. Whence is "this thoughtleſs tranquillity, when thou "and they are equally endangered?" I looked, and ſeeing the gulph of INTEMPERANCE before me, ſtarted and awaked.

NUMB. 103. TUESDAY, *March* 12, 1751.

Scire volunt ſecreta domus, atque inde timeri.
JUV.

CURIOSITY is one of the permanent and certain characteriſticks of a vigorous intellect, to which every advance into knowledge opens new proſpects, and produces new incitements to farther progreſs. All the attainments poſſible in our preſent ſtate are evidently inadequate to our capacities of enjoyment; conqueſt ſerves no purpoſe but that of kindling ambition, diſcovery has no effect but of raiſing

ing expectation; the gratification of one deſire encourages another, and after all our labours, ſtudies, and enquiries, we are continually at the ſame diſtance from the completion of our ſchemes, have ſtill ſome wiſh importunate to be ſatisfied, and ſome faculty reſtleſs and mutinous for want of employment.

THE deſire of knowledge, though it is often animated by extrinſick and adventitious motives, ſeems on many occaſions to operate without ſubordination to any other principle; we are eager to ſee and hear, without intention of referring our obſervations to a farther end; we climb a mountain for a proſpect of the plain; we run to the ſtrand in a ſtorm, that we may contemplate the agitation of the water; we range from city to city, though we profeſs neither architecture nor fortification; we croſs ſeas only to view nature in nakedneſs, or magnificence in ruins; we are equally allured by novelty of every kind, by a deſart or a palace, a cataract or a cavern, by every thing rude, and every thing poliſhed, every thing great and every thing little; we do not ſee a thicket but

but with ſome temptation to enter it, nor remark an inſect flying before us but with an inclination to perſue it.

THIS paſſion is, perhaps, regularly heightened in proportion as the powers of the mind are elevated and enlarged. *Lucan* therefore introduces *Cæſar* ſpeaking with dignity ſuitable to the grandeur of his deſigns and the extent of his capacity, when he declares to the high prieſt of *Egypt*, that he has no deſire equally powerful with that of finding the origin of the *Nile*, and that he would quit all the projects of the civil war for a ſight of thoſe fountains which had been ſo long concealed. And *Homer*, when he would furniſh the *Sirens* with a temptation, to which his hero, renowned for wiſdom, might yield without diſgrace, makes them declare, that none ever departed from them but with encreaſe of knowledge.

THERE is, indeed, ſcarce any kind of ideal acquirement which may not be applied to ſome uſe, or which may not at leaſt gratify pride with occaſional ſuperiority; but whoever attends the motions of his own mind will

will find, that upon the firſt appearance of an object, or the firſt ſtart of a queſtion, his inclination to a nearer view, or more accurate diſcuſſion, precedes all thoughts of profit, or of competition; and that his deſires take wing by inſtantaneous impulſe, though their flight may be invigorated, or their efforts renewed, by ſubſequent conſiderations. The gratification of curioſity rather frees us from uneaſineſs than confers pleaſure; we are more pained by ignorance than delighted by inſtruction. Curioſity is the thirſt of the ſoul; it inflames and torments us, and makes us taſte every thing with joy, however otherwiſe inſipid, by which it may be quenched.

It is evident that the earlieſt ſearchers after knowledge muſt have propoſed knowledge only as their reward; and that ſcience, though perhaps the nurſling of intereſt, was the daughter of curioſity: for who can believe that they who firſt watched the courſe of the ſtars, foreſaw the uſe of their diſcoveries to the facilitation of commerce, or the menſuration of time? They were delighted with the ſplendor of the nocturnal ſkies, they found that the lights changed their places, what they admired

admired they were anxious to underſtand, and in time traced their revolutions.

THERE are, indeed, beings in the form of men, who appear ſatisfied with their intellectual poſſeſſions, and ſeem to live without deſire of enlarging their conceptions; before whom the world paſſes without notice, and who are equally unmoved by nature or by art.

THIS negligence is ſometimes only the temporary effect of a predominant paſſion; a lover finds no inclination to travel any path, but that which leads to the habitation of his miſtreſs; a trader can ſpare little attention to common occurrences, when his fortune is endangered by a ſtorm. It is frequently the conſequence of a total immerſion in ſenſuality: corporeal pleaſures may be indulged till the memory of every other kind of happineſs is obliterated; the mind long habituated to a lethargick and quieſcent ſtate, is unwilling to wake to the toil of thinking; and though ſhe may ſometimes be diſturbed by the obtruſion of new ideas, ſhrinks back again to ignorance and reſt.

BUT,

But, indeed, if we except them to whom the continual taſk of procuring the ſupports of life, denies all opportunities of deviation from their own narrow track, the number of ſuch as live without the ardour of enquiry, is very ſmall, though many content themſelves with cheap amuſements, and waſte their lives in reſearches of no importance.

There is no ſnare more dangerous to buſy and excurſive minds, than the cobwebs of petty inquiſitiveneſs, which entangle them in trivial employments and minute ſtudies, and detain them in a middle ſtate between the tediouſneſs of total inactivity, and the fatigue of laborious efforts, enchant them at once with eaſe and novelty, and vitiate them with the luxury of learning. The neceſſity of doing ſomething, and the fear of undertaking much, ſinks the hiſtorian to a genealogiſt, the philoſopher to a journaliſt of the weather, and the mathematician to a conſtructer of dials.

It is happy when thoſe who cannot content themſelves to be idle, nor reſolve to be indu-

induſtrious, are at leaſt employed without injury to others; but it ſeldom happens that we can contain ourſelves long in a neutral ſtate, or forbear to ſink into vice, when we are no longer ſoaring towards virtue.

NUGACULUS was diſtinguiſhed in his earlier years by an uncommon livelineſs of imagination, quickneſs of ſagacity, and extent of knowledge. When after having paſſed through the uſual methods of education, he entered into life, he applied himſelf with particular inquiſitiveneſs to examine the various motives of human actions, the complicated influence of mingled affections, the different modifications of intereſt and ambition, and the various cauſes of miſcarriage and ſucceſs both in public and private affairs.

THOUGH his friends did not diſcover to what purpoſe all theſe obſervations were collected, or how *Nugaculus* would much improve his virtue or his fortune by an inceſſant attention to changes of countenance, burſts of inconſideration, ſallies of paſſion, and all the other caſualties by which he uſed to trace a character, yet they could not deny the

ſtudy of human nature to be worthy of a wiſe man; they therefore flattered his vanity, applauded his diſcoveries, and liſtened with ſubmiſſive modeſty to his lectures on the uncertainty of inclination, the weakneſs of reſolves, and the inſtability of temper, to his account of the various motives which agitate the mind, and his ridicule of the modern dream of a ruling paſſion.

Such was the firſt incitement of *Nugacula* to a cloſe inſpection into the conduct of mankind. He had no intereſt in view, and therefore no deſign of ſupplantation; he had no malevolence, and therefore detected faults without any intention to expoſe them; but having once found the art of engaging his attention upon others, he had no inclination to call it back to himſelf, but has paſſed his time in keeping a watchful eye upon every riſing character, and lived upon a ſmall eſtate without any thought of encreaſing it.

He is, by continual application, become a general maſter of ſecret hiſtory, and can give an account of the intrigues, private marriages, competitions, and ſtratagems of half

half a century. He knows the mortgages upon every man's eſtate, the terms upon which every ſpendthrift raiſes his money, the real and reputed fortune of every lady, the jointure ſtipulated by every contract, and the expectations of every family from maiden aunts and childleſs acquaintances. He can relate the economy of every houſe, knows how much one man's cellar is robbed by his butler, and the land of another underlet by his ſteward; he can tell where the manor-houſe is falling, though large ſums are yearly paid for repairs; and where the tenants are felling woods without the conſent of the owner.

To obtain all this intelligence he is inadvertently guilty of a thouſand acts of treachery. He ſees no man's ſervant without draining him of his truſt; he enters no family without flattering the children into diſcoveries; he is a perpetual ſpy upon the doors of his neighbours; and knows, by long experience, at whatever diſtance, the looks of a creditor, a borrower, a lover, and a pimp.

NUGACULUS is not ill-natured, and there-

fore his induſtry has not hitherto been very miſchievous to others, or dangerous to himſelf; but ſince he cannot enjoy this knowledge but by diſcovering it, and, if he had no other motive to loquacity, is obliged to traffick like the chymiſts, and purchaſe one ſecret with another, he is every day more hated as he is more known; for he is conſidered by great numbers as one that has their fame and their happineſs in his power, and no man can much love him of whom he lives in fear.

THUS has an intention, innocent at firſt, if not laudable, the intention of regulating his own behaviour by the experience of others, betrayed *Nugaculus* not only to a fooliſh, but vicious waſte of a life which might have been honourably paſſed in public ſervices, or domeſtic virtues. Such is the fate of all exceſſive deſires, and ſuch the conſequence of giving up the mind to employments that engroſs, but do not improve it.

NUMB. 104. SATURDAY, *March* 16, 1751.

—— Nihil eſt quod credere de ſe
Non poſſit —— Juv.

THE apparent inſufficiency of every individual to his own happineſs or ſafety, compels us to ſeek from one another aſſiſtance and ſupport. The neceſſity of joint efforts for the execution of any great or extenſive deſign, the variety of powers diſſeminated in the ſpecies, and the proportion between the defects and excellencies of different perſons, demand an interchange of help, and communication of intelligence, and by frequent reciprocations of beneficence, unite mankind in ſociety and friendſhip.

IF it can be imagined that there ever was a time when the inhabitants of any country were in a ſtate of equality, without diſtinction of rank, or peculiarity of poſſeſſions, it is reaſonable to believe that every man was then loved in proportion as he could contribute by his ſtrength, or his ſkill, to the ſupply of natu-

ral wants; that there was little room for peevish delicacy, or capricious favour; that the affections then admitted into the heart, was rather esteem than tenderness; and that kindness was only purchased by benefits. But when by force or policy, by wisdom or by fortune, property and superiority were introduced and established, so that many were condemned to labour for the support of a few, then they whose possessions swelled above their wants, naturally laid out their superfluities upon pleasure; and those who could not gain friendship by necessary offices, endeavoured to promote their interest by luxurious gratifications, and to create need, which they might be courted to supply.

THE desires of mankind are so much more numerous than their attainments, and the capacity of imagination so much larger than actual enjoyment, that no power of bestowing can equal expectation. Every distant appearance of advantage must therefore excite struggles and competitions; that which can be obtained only by one will be desired by multitudes, while there remain multitudes unsatisfied with their allotment; and he who cannot hope

to

to ſucceed by real ſervices, and either finds no room for the exertion of great qualities, or perceives himſelf excelled by his rivals, will have recourſe to other expedients, will endeavour to become agreeable where he cannot be important, and learn, by degrees, to number the *art of pleaſing* among the moſt uſeful ſtudies, and moſt valuable acquiſitions.

THIS art, like others, is cultivated in proportion to its uſefulneſs, and will always flouriſh moſt where it is moſt rewarded: for this reaſon we find it practiſed with great aſſiduity under abſolute governments, where honours and riches are in the hands of one man, whom all endeavour to propitiate, and who ſoon becomes ſo much accuſtomed to compliance and officiouſneſs, as not eaſily to find, in the moſt delicate addreſs, that novelty which is neceſſary to procure attention.

IT is diſcovered by a very few experiments, that no man is much pleaſed with a companion, who does not encreaſe, in ſome reſpect, his fondneſs of himſelf; and, therefore, he that wiſhes rather to be led forward to proſperity by the gentle hand of favour,

than to force his way by labour and merit, muſt conſider with more care how to diſplay his patron's excellencies than his own; that whenever he approaches, he may fill the imagination with pleaſing dreams, and chaſe away diſguſt and wearineſs by a perpetual ſucceſſion of delightful images.

THIS may, indeed, ſometimes be effected by turning the attention upon advantages which are really poſſeſſed, or upon proſpects which reaſon ſpreads before hope; for, whoever can deſerve or require to be courted has generally, either from nature or from fortune, gifts, which he may review with ſatisfaction, and of which when he is artfully recalled to the contemplation, he will ſeldom be diſpleaſed.

BUT thoſe who have once degraded their underſtanding to an application only to the paſſions, and who have learned to derive hope from any other ſources than induſtry and virtue, ſeldom retain dignity and magnanimity ſufficient to defend them againſt the conſtant recurrence of temptation to falſhood. He that is too deſirous to be loved will ſoon learn

learn to flatter, and when he has exhausted all the variations of honeſt praiſe, and can delight no longer with the civility of truth, he will invent new topics of panegyric, and break out into raptures at virtues and beauties conferred by himſelf.

The drudgeries of dependence would, indeed, be aggravated by hopeleſneſs of ſucceſs, if no indulgence was allowed to adulation. He that will obſtinately confine his patron to hear only the commendations which he deſerves, will ſoon be forced to give way to others that regale him with more compoſs of muſic. The greateſt human virtue bears no proportion to human vanity. We always think ourſelves better than we are, and are generally deſirous that others ſhould think us ſtill better than we think ourſelves. To praiſe us for actions, or diſpoſitions, which deſerve praiſe, is not to confer a benefit, but to pay a tribute. We have always pretenſions to fame, which, in our own hearts, we know to be diſputable, and which we are deſirous to ſtrengthen by a new ſuffrage; we have always hopes which we ſuſpect to be falla-

ciens, and of which we eagerly ſnatch at every conſumation.

It may, indeed, be proper to make the firſt approaches under the conduct of truth, and to ſecure credit to future encomiums, by ſuch praiſe as may be ratified by the conſcience; but the mind once habituated to the luſciouſneſs of eulogy, becomes in a ſhort time nice and faſtidious, and like a vitiated palate is inceſſantly calling for higher gratifications.

It is ſcarcely credible how far diſcernment may be dazzled by the miſt of pride, and wiſdom infatuated by the intoxication of flattery; or how low the genius may deſcend by ſucceſſive gradations of ſervility, and how ſwiftly it may fall down the precipice of falſhood. No man can, indeed, obſerve without indignation, on what names, both of antient and modern times, the utmoſt exuberance of praiſe has been laviſhed, and by what hands it has been beſtowed. It has never yet been found, that the tyrant, the plunderer, the oppreſſor, the moſt hateful of the hateful, the moſt profligate of the profligate,

profligate, have been denied any celebration which they were willing to purchase, or their wickedneſs and folly have not found correſpondent flatterers through all their labyrinations, except when they have been aſſociated with avarice or poverty, and have wanted either inclination or ability to hire a panegyriſt.

As there is no character ſo deformed as to fright away from it the proſtitutes of praiſe, there is no degree of encomiaſtic veneration which pride has refuſed. The emperors of *Rome* ſuffered themſelves to be worſhiped in their lives with altars and ſacrifice; and in an age more enlightened the terms peculiar to the praiſe and worſhip of the Supreme Being, have been applied to wretches whom it was the reproach of humanity to number among men; and whom nothing but riches or power hindered thoſe that read or wrote their deification, from hunting into the toils of juſtice, as diſturbers of the peace of nature.

THERE are, indeed, many among the poetical flatterers, who muſt be reſigned to infamy without vindication, and whom we muſt

cauſes to have deſerted the cauſe of virtue for pay. They have committed, againſt full conviction, the crime of obliterating the diſtinctions between good and evil, and, inſtead of oppoſing the encroachments of vice, have incited her progreſs, and celebrated her conqueſts. But there is a lower claſs of ſycophants, whoſe underſtanding has not made them capable of equal guilt. Every man of high rank is ſurrounded with numbers, who have no other rule of thought or action, than his maxims, and his conduct; whom the honour of being numbered among his acquaintance, reconciles to all his vices, and all his abſurdities; and who eaſily perſuade themſelves to eſteem him, by whoſe regard they conſider themſelves as diſtinguiſhed and exalted.

It is dangerous for mean minds to venture themſelve within the ſphere of greatneſs. Stupidity is ſoon blinded by the ſplendour of wealth, and cowardice is eaſily fettered in the ſhackles of dependence. To ſolicit patronage, is, at leaſt in the event, to ſet virtue to ſale. None can be pleaſed without praiſe, and few can be praiſed without falſhood;

few

few can be aſſiduous without ſervility, and none can be ſervile without corruption.

NUMB. 105. TUESDAY, *March* 19, 1751.

——— *Animorum*
Impulſu, et cæcâ magnâque cupidine ductî.
JUV.

I Was lately conſidering among other objects of ſpeculation, the new attempt of an *univerſal regiſter*, an office, in which every man may lodge an account of his ſuperfluities and wants, of whatever he deſires to purchaſe, or to ſell. My imagination ſoon preſented to me the latitude to which this deſign may be extended by integrity and induſtry, and the advantages which may be juſtly hoped from a general mart of intelligence, when once its reputation ſhall be ſo eſtabliſhed, that neither reproach nor fraud ſhall be feared from it; when an application to it ſhall not be cenſured as the laſt reſource of deſperation, nor its informations ſuſpected as the fortuitious ſuggeſtions of men obliged not

not to appear ignorant. A place where every [illegible] may be discharged, and every deficiency supplied, where every lawful passing may find its gratifications, and every honest curiosity receive satisfaction, where the stock of a nation, pecuniary and intellectual, may be brought together, and where all conditions of humanity may hope to find relief, pleasure, and accommodation, must equally deserve the attention of the merchant and philosopher, of him who mingles in the tumult of business, and him who only lives to amuse himself with the various employments and pursuits of others. Nor will it be an uninstructing school to the greatest masters of method and dispatch, if such multiplicity can be preserved from embarrasment, and such tumult from inaccuracy.

While I was concerting this splendid project, and filling my thoughts with its regulation, its conveniencies, its variety, and its consequences, I sunk gradually into slumber; but the same images, though less distinct, still continued to float upon my fancy. I perceived myself at the gate of an immense edifice, where innumerable multitudes were

passing

passing without confusion; every face on which I fixed my eyes, seemed settled in the contemplation of some important purpose, and every foot was hastened by eagerness and expectation. I followed the crowd without knowing whither I should be drawn, and remained a while in the unpleasing state of an idler where all other beings were busy, giving place every moment to those who had more importance in their looks. Ashamed to stand ignorant, and afraid to ask questions, at last I saw a lady sweeping by me, whom, by the quickness of her eyes, the agility of her steps, and a mixture of levity and impatience, I knew to be my long loved protectress, CURIOSITY. "Great goddess," said I, "may thy votary be permitted to "implore thy favour; if thou hast been my "directress from the first dawn of reason, if "I have followed thee through the maze of "life with invariable fidelity, if I have turn-"ed to every new call, and quitted at thy "nod one persuit for another, if I have never "stopped at the invitations of fortune, nor "forgot thy authority in the bowers of plea-"sure, inform me now whither chance has "conducted me.

"THOU

"THOU art now," replied the smiling lover, "in the presence of JUSTICE, and of "TRUTH, whom the father of gods and "men has sent down to register the demands "and pretensions of mankind, that the world "may at last be reduced to order, and that "none may complain hereafter of being "doomed to tasks for which they are un-"qualified, of possessing faculties for which "they cannot find employment, or virtues "that languish unobserved for want of op-"portunities to exert them, of being encum-"bered with superfluities which they would "willingly resign, or of wasting away in de-"sires which ought to be satisfied. JUSTICE "is now to examine every man's wishes, and "TRUTH is to record them; let us ap-"proach, and observe the progress of this great "transaction."

SHE then moved forward, and TRUTH, who knew her among the most faithful of her followers, beckoned her to advance, till we were placed near the seat of JUSTICE. The first who required the assistance of the office, came forward with a slow pace, and tumour of dignity, and shaking a weighty purse in his hand,

hand, demanded to be regiſtred by TRUTH, as the MECÆNAS of the preſentage, the chief encourager of literary merit, to whom men of learning and wit might apply in any exigence or diſtreſs with certainty of ſuccour. JUSTICE very mildly enquired whether he had calculated the expence of ſuch a declaration? whether he had been informed what number of petitioners would ſwarm about him? whether he could diſtinguiſh idleneſs and negligence from calamity, oſtentation from knowledge, or vivacity from wit? To theſe queſtions he ſeemed not well provided with a reply, but repeated his deſire to be recorded a patron. JUSTICE then offered to regiſter his propoſal on theſe conditions, that he ſhould never ſuffer himſelf to be flattered; that he ſhould never delay an audience when he had nothing to do; and that he ſhould never encourage followers without intending to reward them. Theſe terms were too hard to be accepted; for what, ſaid he, is the end of patronage, but the pleaſure of reading dedications, holding multitudes in ſuſpenſe, and enjoying their hopes, their fears, and their anxiety, flattering them to aſſiduity, and, at laſt, diſmiſſing them for impatience? JUSTICE heard

heard his confession, and ordered his name to be pasted upon the gate among cheats, and robbers, and publick nuisances, which all were by that notice warned to avoid.

Another required to be made known as the discoverer of a new art of education, by which languages and sciences might be taught to all capacities, and all inclinations, without fear of punishment, pain of confinement, loss of any part of the gay mien of ignorance, or any obstruction of the necessary progress in dress, dancing, or cards.

Justice and Truth did not trouble this great adept with many enquiries; but finding his address awkward, and his speech barbarous, ordered him to be registred as a tall fellow who wanted employment, and might serve in any post where the knowledge of reading and writing was not required

A man of a very great and philosophic aspect required notice to be given of his intention to set out a certain day, on a submarine voyage, and of his willingness to take in passengers for no more than double the price

at

at which they might ſail above water. His deſire was granted, and he retired to a convenient ſtand in expectation of filling his ſhip, and growing rich in a ſhort time by the ſecrecy, ſafety, and expedition of the paſſage.

ANOTHER deſired to adverti ſe the curious that he had, for the advancement of true knowledge, contrived an optical inſtrument, by which thoſe who laid out their induſtry on memorials of the changes of the wind, might obſerve the direction of the weathercocks on the hither ſide of the lunar world.

ANOTHER wiſhed to be known as the author of an invention, by which cities or kingdoms might be made warm in winter by a ſingle fire, a kettle, and pipe. Another had a vehicle by which a man might bid defiance to floods, and continue floating in an inundation without any inconvenience till the water ſhould ſubſide. JUSTICE conſidered theſe projects as of no importance but to their authors, and therefore ſcarcely condeſcended to examine them; but TRUTH refuſed to admit them into the regiſter.

TWENTY

TWENTY different pretenders came in one hour to give notice of an universal medicine, by which all diseases might be cured or prevented, and life protracted beyond the age of NESTOR. But JUSTICE informed them, that one universal medicine was sufficient, and she would delay the notification of her office, till she saw who could longest preserve his own life.

A THOUSAND other claims and offers were exhibited and examined. I remarked among this mighty multitude, that, of intellectual advantages, many had great exuberance, and few confessed any want; of every art there were a hundred professors for a single pupil: but of other attainments, such as riches, honours, and preferments, I found none that had too much, but thousands and ten thousands that thought themselves intitled to a larger dividend.

IT often happened that old misers, and women married at the close of life, advertised their want of children; nor was it uncommon for those who had a numerous offspring,

to

to give notice of a ſon or daughter to be ſtar-
red; but though appearances promiſed well on both ſides, the bargain ſeldom ſucceeded; for they ſoon loſt their inclination to adopted children, and proclaimed their intentions to promote ſome ſcheme of public charity; a thouſand propoſals were immediately made, among which they heſitated till death precluded the deciſion.

As I ſtood looking on this ſcene of confuſion, TRUTH condeſcended to aſk me what was my buſineſs at her office? I was ſtruck with the unexpected queſtion, and awaked by my efforts to anſwer it.

NUMB. 106. SATURDAY, *March* 23, 1751.

Optimum commentum dolet diu, natura judicio confirmat. Cic.

IT is neceſſary to the ſucceſs of flattery, that it be accommodated to particular circumſtances or characters, and enter the heart on that ſide where the paſſions ſtand ready to receive it. A lady ſeldom liſtens with attention to any praiſe but that of her beauty; a trader always expects to hear of his influence at the bank, his importance on the exchange, the height of his credit, and the extent of his traffick; and the author will ſcarcely be pleaſed without ſome lamentations of the neglect of learning, the conſpiracies againſt genius, and the ſlow progreſs of merit, or ſome praiſes of the diſintereſtedneſs and magnanimity of thoſe who encounter poverty and contempt in the cauſe of knowledge, and truſt for the reward of their labours to the judgment and gratitude of poſterity.

AN aſſurance of unfading laurels, and immortal reputation, is the ſettled reciprocation of civility between amicable writers; to raiſe

monuments more durable than braſs, and more conſpicuous than pyramids, has been long the common boaſt of literature; but among the innumerable architects that erect columns to themſelves, far the greateſt part, either for want of durable materials, or of art to diſpoſe them, ſee their edifices periſh as they are towering to completion, and thoſe few that for a while attract the eye of mankind, are generally weak in the foundation, and ſoon ſink by the ſaps of time.

No place affords a more ſtriking conviction of the vanity of human hopes, than a publick library; for who can ſee the wall crouded on every ſide by mighty volumes, the works of laborious meditation, and accurate enquiry, now ſcarcely known but by the catalogue, and preſerved only to encreaſe the pomp of learning, without conſidering how many hours have been waſted in vain endeavours, how often imagination has anticipated the praiſes of futurity, how many ſtatues have riſen to the eye of vanity, how many ideal converts have elevated zeal, how often wit has exulted in the eternal infamy of his antagoniſts, and dogmatiſm has delighted in the gradual

gradual advances of his authority, the immutability of his decrees, and the perpetuity of his power?

——*Nec unquam dedit*
Documenta fors majora, quàm fragili loco
Starent superbi.——

Of the innumerable authors whose performances are thus treasured up in magnificent obscurity, most are undoubtedly forgotten, because they never deserved to be remembred, and owed the honours which they once obtained, not to judgment or to genius, to labour or to art, but to the prejudice of faction, the stratagems of intrigue, or the servility of adulation.

Nothing is more common than to find men whose works are now totally neglected, mentioned with praises by their contemporaries, as the oracles of their age, and the legislators of science. Curiosity is naturally excited, their volumes after long enquiry are found, but seldom reward the labour of the search. Every period of time has produced these bubbles of artificial fame, which are kept

kept up a while by the breath of fashion, and then break at once and are annihilated. The learned often bewail the loss of ancient writers whose characters have survived their works; but, perhaps, if we could now retrieve them, we should find them only the *Granvilles*, *Montagues*, *Stepneys*, and *Sheffields* of their time, and wonder by what infatuation or caprice they could rise to notice.

It cannot, however, be denied, that many have sunk into oblivion, whom it were unjust to number with this despicable class. Various kinds of literary fame seem destined to various measures of duration. Some spread into exuberance with a very speedy growth, but soon wither and decay; some rise more slowly, but last long. *Parnassus* has its flowers of transient fragrance, as well as its oaks of towering height, and its laurels of eternal verdure.

Among those whose reputation is exhausted in a short time by its own luxuriance, are the writers who take advantage of some present incidents and characters which strongly interest the passions, and engage universal

attention. It is not difficult to obtain readers, when we diſcuſs a queſtion which every one is deſirous to underſtand, which is debated in every aſſembly, and has divided the nation into parties; or when we diſplay the faults or virtues of him, whoſe public conduct has made almoſt every man his enemy or his friend. To the quick circulation of ſuch productions all the motives of intereſt and vanity concur; the diſputant enlarges his knowledge, the zealot animates his paſſion, and every man is deſirous to inform himſelf concerning affairs ſo vehemently agitated and variouſly repreſented.

It is ſcarcely to be imagined, through how many ſubordinations of intereſt, the ardour of party is diffuſed; and what multitudes fancy themſelves affected by every ſatire or panegyrick on a man of eminence. Whoever has, at any time, taken occaſion to mention him with praiſe or blame, whoever happens to love or hate any of his adherents, is deſirous to confirm his opinion, and to ſtrengthen his party, and diligently peruſes every paper from which he can hope for ſentiments like his own. An object, however ſmall in itſelf, if placed

near to the eye, will engroſs all the rays of light; and a tranſaction, however trivial, ſwells into importance, when it preſſes immediately on our attention. He that ſhall peruſe the political pamphlets of any paſt reign, will wonder why they were ſo generally purchaſed, ſo eagerly read, or ſo loudly praiſed; many of the performances which had power to inflame factions, and fill a kingdom with confuſion, have now very little effect upon a frigid critick, and the time is coming, when the compoſitions of later hirelings ſhall lie equally deſpiſed and forgotten. In proportion, as thoſe who write on temporary ſubjects, are exalted above their merit at firſt, they are afterwards depreſſed below it; nor can the brighteſt elegance of diction, or moſt artful ſubtilty of reaſoning, hope for much eſteem from thoſe whoſe regard is no longer quickened by intereſt or by pride.

It is, indeed, the fate of controvertiſts, even when they contend for philoſophical or theological truth, to be ſoon laid aſide and ſlighted. Either the queſtion is decided; and there is no more place for doubt and oppoſition; or mankind deſpair of underſtanding it,

and grow weary of diſturbance, content themſelves with quiet ignorance, and refuſe to be haraſſed with labours which they have no hopes of recompenſing with knowledge.

THE authors of new diſcoveries may ſurely expect to be reckoned among thoſe, whoſe writings are ſecure of veneration: yet it often happens that the general reception of a doctrine obſcures the books in which it was delivered. When any tenet is generally received and adopted as an incontrovertible principle, we ſeldom look back to the arguments upon which it was firſt eſtabliſhed, or can bear that tediouſneſs of deduction, and multiplicity of evidence, by which its author was forced to reconcile it to prejudice, and fortify it in the weakneſs of novelty againſt obſtinacy and envy.

IT is well known how much of our philoſophy is derived from *Boyle*'s diſcovery of the qualities of the air; yet of thoſe who now adopt or enlarge his theory, very few have read the detail of his experiments. His name is, indeed, reverenced; but his works are neglected; we are contented to know, that he conquered

conquered his opponents, without enquiring what cavils were produced againſt him, or by what proofs they were confuted.

Some writers apply themſelves to ſtudies boundleſs and inexhauſtible, as experiments and natural philoſophy. Theſe are always loſt in ſucceſſive compilations, as new advances are made, and former obſervations become more familiar. Others ſpend their lives in remarks on language, or explanations of antiquities, and only afford materials for lexicographers and commentators; theſe are themſelves overwhelmed by ſubſequent collectors, who equally deſtroy the memory of their predeceſſors by amplification, tranſpoſition, or contraction. Every new ſyſtem of nature gives birth to a ſwarm of expoſitors, whoſe buſineſs is to explain and illuſtrate it, and who can hope to exiſt no longer than the founder of their ſect preſerves his reputation.

There are, indeed, few kinds of compoſition from which an author, however learned or ingenious, can hope a long continuance of fame. He who has carefully ſtudied human

nature, and can well deſcribe it, may with moſt reaſon flatter his ambition. *Bacon*, among all his pretenſions to the regard of poſterity, ſeems to have pleaſed himſelf chiefly with his eſſays, *which come home to mens buſineſs and boſoms*, and of which, therefore, he declares his expectation, that they *will live as long as books laſt*. It may, however, ſatisfy an honeſt and benevolent mind to have been uſeful, though leſs conſpicuous; nor will he that extends his hopes to higher rewards, be ſo much anxious to obtain praiſe, as to diſcharge the duty which Providence aſſigns him.

NUMB. 107. TUESDAY, *March* 26, 1751.

Alternis igitur contendere verſibus ambo
Cœpere: alternos muſæ meminiſſe volebant.

VIRG.

AMONG the various cenſures, which the unavoidable compariſon of my performances with thoſe of my predeceſſors has produced, there is none more general than that of uniformity. Many of my readers remark the want of thoſe changes of colours, which formerly fed the attention with unexhauſted novelty, and of that intermixture of ſubjects, or alternation of manner, by which other writers relieved wearineſs, and awakened expectation.

I HAVE, indeed, hitherto avoided the practice of uniting gay and ſolemn ſubjects in the ſame paper, becauſe it ſeems abſurd for an author to counteract himſelf, to preſs at once with equal force upon both parts of the intellectual balance, and give medicines, which, like the double poiſon of *Dryden*, deſtroy the force of one another. I have endeavoured ſometimes to divert, and ſome-

times to elevate; but have imagined it an uſeleſs attempt to diſturb merriment by ſolemnity, or interrupt ſerioufneſs by drollery. Yet I ſhall this day publiſh two letters of very different tendency, which, I hope, like tragi-comedy, may chance to pleaſe even when they are not critically approved.

To the RAMBLER.

DEAR SIR,

THOUGH, as my mamma tells me, I am too young to talk at the table, I have great pleaſure in liſtening to the converſation of learned men, eſpecially when they diſcourſe of things which I do not underſtand; and have, therefore, been of late particularly delighted with many diſputes about the *alteration of the ſtile*, which, they ſay, is to be made by act of parliament.

ONE day, when my mamma was gone out of the room, I aſked a very great ſcholar what the ſtile was. He told me, he was afraid I ſhould hardly underſtand him when he informed me, that it was the ſtated and eſtabliſhed method of computing time. It was not, indeed,

indeed, likely that I ſhould underſtand him; for I never yet knew time computed in my life, nor can imagine why we ſhould be at ſo much trouble to count what we cannot keep. He did not tell me whether we are to count the time paſt, or the time to come; but I have conſidered them both by myſelf, and think it as fooliſh to count time that is gone, as money that is ſpent; and as for the time which is to come, it only ſeems farther off by counting; and therefore when any pleaſure is promiſed me, I always think of the time as little as I can.

I HAVE ſince liſtened very attentively to every one that talked upon this ſubject, of whom the greater part ſeem not to underſtand it better than myſelf; for though they often hint how much the nation has been miſtaken, and rejoice that we are at laſt growing wiſer than our anceſtors, I have never been able to diſcover from them, that any body has died ſooner or been married later for counting time wrong; and, therefore, I began to fancy, that there was great buſtle with little conſequence.

At laſt two friends of my papa, Mr. *Cycle* and Mr. *Starlight*, being, it ſeems, both of high learning, and able to make an almanack, began to talk about the new ſtile. Sweet Mr. *Starlight*—I am ſure I ſhall love his name as long as I live; for he told *Cycle* roundly, with a fierce look, that we ſhould never be right without a *year of confuſion*. Dear Mr. Rambler, did you ever hear any thing ſo charming? a whole year of confuſion! When there has been a rout at mamma's, I have thought one night of confuſion worth a thouſand nights of reſt; and ſurely if I can but ſee a year of confuſion, a whole year, of cards in one room, and dancings in another, here a feaſt, and there a maſquerade, and plays, and coaches, and hurries, and meſſages, and milaners, and raps at the door, and viſits, and frolicks, and new faſhions, I ſhall not care what they do with the reſt of the time, nor whether they count it by the old ſtile or the new; for I am reſolved to break looſe from the nurſery in the tumult, and play my part among the reſt; and it will be ſtrange if I cannot get a huſband and a chariot in the year of confuſion.

Cycle,

CYCLE, who is neither ſo young nor ſo handſome as *Starlight*, very gravely maintained, that all the perplexity may be avoided by leaping over eleven days in the reckoning; and indeed, if it ſhould come only to this, I think the new ſtile is a delightful thing; for my mamma ſays I ſhall go to court when I am ſixteen, and if they can but contrive often to leap over eleven days together, the months of reſtraint will ſoon be at an end. It is ſtrange, that with all the plots that have been laid againſt time, they could never kill it by act of parliament before. Dear Sir, if you have any vote or intereſt, get them but for once to deſtroy eleven months, and then I ſhall be as old as ſome married ladies. But this is deſired only if you think they will not comply with Mr. *Starlight*'s ſcheme; for nothing ſurely could pleaſe me like a year of confuſion, when I ſhall no longer be fixed this hour to my pen and the next to my needle, or wait at home for the dancing-maſter one day, and the next for the muſick-maſter, but run from ball to ball, and from drum to drum; and ſpend all my time without taſks, and without account, and go out without

telling whither, and come home without regard to preſcribed hours, or family-rules.

I am, Sir,

Your humble ſervant,

PROPERANTIA.

Mr. RAMBLER,

I WAS ſeized this morning with an unuſual penſiveneſs, and finding that books only ſerved to heighten it, took a ramble into the fields, in hopes of relief and invigoration from the keenneſs of the air, and brightneſs of the ſun.

As I wandered wrapped up in thought, my eyes were ſtruck with the hoſpital for the reception of deſerted infants, which I ſurveyed with pleaſure, till by a natural train of ſentiment, I began to reflect on the fate of the mothers. For to what ſhelter can they fly? Only to the arms of their betrayer, which perhaps are now no longer open to receive them; and then how quick muſt be the tranſition from deluded virtue to ſhameleſs guilt,

and

and from ſhameleſs guilt to hopeleſs wretchedneſs?

THE anguiſh that I felt, left me no reſt till had, by your means, addreſſed myſelf to the publick on behalf of thoſe forlorn creatures, the women of the town; whoſe miſery here, might ſatisfy the moſt rigorous cenſor, and whoſe participation of our common nature might purely induce us to endeavour, at leaſt, their preſervation from eternal puniſhment.

THESE were all ôncè, if not virtuous, at leaſt innocent; and might ſtill have continued blameleſs and eaſy, but for the arts and inſinuations of thoſe whoſe rank, fortune, or education, furniſhed them with means to corrupt or to delude them. Let the libertine reflect a moment on the ſituation of that woman, who being forſaken by her betrayer, is reduced to the neceſſity of turning proſtitute for bread, and judge of the enormity of his guilt by the evils which it produces.

IT cannot be doubted but that numbers follow this dreadful courſe of life, with ſhame, horror, and regret; but, where can they hope

for

for refuge? "*The world is not their friend,* "*nor the world's law.*" Their ſighs, and tears, and groans, are criminal in the eye of their tyrants, the bully and the bawd, who fatten on their miſery, and threaten them with want or a gaol, if they ſhew the leaſt deſign of eſcaping from their bondage.

"To wipe all tears from off all faces," is a taſk too hard for mortals; but to alleviate misfortunes is often within the moſt limited power: yet the opportunities which every day affords of relieving the moſt wretched of human beings are overlooked and neglected, with equal diſregard of policy and goodneſs.

THERE are places, indeed, ſet apart, to which theſe unhappy creatures may reſort, when the diſeaſes of incontinence ſeize upon them; but, if they obtain a cure, to what are they reduced? Either to return with the ſmall remains of beauty to their former guilt, or periſh in the ſtreets with nakedneſs and hunger.

How frequently have the gay and thoughtleſs, in their evening frolicks, ſeen a band of theſe miſerable females, covered with rags, ſhivering

ſhivering with cold, and pining with hunger; and, without either pitying their calamities, or reflecting upon the cruelty of thoſe who perhaps firſt ſeduced them by careſſes of fondneſs, or magnificence of promiſes, go on to reduce others to the ſame wretchedneſs by the ſame means?

To ſtop the increaſe of this deplorable multitude, is undoubtedly the firſt and moſt preſſing conſideration. To prevent evil is the great end of government, the end for which vigilance and ſeverity are properly employed. But ſurely thoſe whom paſſion or intereſt have already depraved, have ſome claim to compaſſion, from beings equally frail and fallible with themſelves. Nor will they long groan in their preſent afflictions, if none were to refuſe them relief, but who owe their exemption from the ſame diſtreſs only to their wiſdom and their virtue.

I am, &c.

AMICUS.

NUMB.

NUMB. 108. SATURDAY, *March* 30, 1751.

Sapere aude,
Incipe. Vivendi recte qui prorogat horam,
Ruſticus expectat dum defluat amnis: at ille
Labitur, & labetur in omne volubilis ævum.

HOR.

AN ancient poet, unreaſonably diſcontented at the preſent ſtate of things, which his ſyſtem of opinions obliged him to repreſent in its worſt form, has obſerved of the earth, "that its greater part is covered by the "uninhabitable ocean; that of the reſt ſome "is encumbered with naked mountains, and "ſome loſt under barren ſands; ſome ſcorched "with unintermitted heat, and ſome petrified with perpetual froſt; ſo that only a "few regions remain for the production of "fruits, the paſture of cattle, and the accommodation of man."

THE ſame obſervation may be transferred to the time allotted us in our preſent ſtate. When we have deducted all that is abſorbed in ſleep, all that is inevitably appropriated to the demands of nature, or irreſiſtibly engroſſed by

by the tyranny of cuſtom; all that paſſes in regulating the ſuperficial decorations of life, or is given up in the reciprocations of civility to the diſpoſal of others; all that is torn from us by violence of diſeaſe, or ſtolen imperceptibly away by laſſitude and languor; we ſhall find that part of our duration very ſmall of which we can truly call ourſelves maſters, or which we can ſpend wholly at our own choice. Many of our hours are loſt in a rotation of petty cares, in a conſtant recurrence of the ſame employments; many of our proviſions for eaſe or happineſs are always exhauſted by the preſent day; and a great part of our exiſtence ſerves no other purpoſe, than that of enabling us to enjoy the reſt.

Of the few moments which are left in our diſpoſal, it may reaſonably be expected, that we ſhould be ſo frugal, as to let none of them ſlip from us without ſome equivalent; and perhaps it might be found, that as the earth, however ſtreightened by rocks or waters, is capable of producing more than all its inhabitants are able to conſume, our lives, though much contracted by incidental diſtraction, and inevitable avocations, would yet afford us a large

large ſpace vacant to the exerciſe of our reaſon and our virtue; that we want not time, but diligence, for great performances; and that we ſquander much of our allowance, even think it ſparing and inſufficient.

THIS natural and neceſſary comminution of our lives, perhaps, often makes us inſenſible of the negligence with which we ſuffer them to ſlide away; we never conſider ourſelves as poſſeſſed at once of time ſufficient for any great deſign, and therefore indulge ourſelves in fortuitous amuſements. We think it unneceſſary to take an account of a few ſupernumerary moments, which, however employed, could have produced little advantage, and which were expoſed to a thouſand chances of diſturbance and interruption.

IT is obſervable, that either by nature or by habit, our underſtandings are fitted to images of a certain extent, to which we adjuſt great things by diviſion, and little things by accumulation. Of extenſive ſurfaces we can only take a ſurvey, as the parts ſucceed one another; and atoms we cannot perceive, till they are united into maſſes. Thus we break the

the vaſt periods of time into centuries and years; and thus, if we would know the amount of moments, we muſt agglomerate them into days and weeks.

THE proverbial oracles of our parſimonious anceſtors have informed us, that the fatal waſte of fortune is by ſmall expences, by the profuſion of ſums too little ſingly to alarm our caution, and which we never ſuffer ourſelves to conſider together. Of the ſame kind is the prodigality of life; he that hopes to look back hereafter with ſatisfaction upon paſt years, muſt learn to know the preſent value of ſingle minutes, and endeavour to let no particle of time fall uſeleſs to the ground.

IT is uſual for thoſe who are adviſed to the perſuit of any ſtudy, or the attainment of any new qualification, to look upon themſelves as required to change the general courſe of their conduct, to diſmiſs buſineſs, and exclude pleaſure, and to devote their days and nights to a particular attention. But all common degrees of excellence are attainable at a lower price; he that ſhould ſteadily and reſolutely aſſign to any ſcience or language

thoſe interſtitial vacancies which intervene in the moſt crouded variety of diverſion or employment, would find every day new irradiations of knowledge, and diſcover how much more is to be hoped from frequency and perſeverance than from violent efforts, and ſudden deſires; efforts which are ſoon remitted when they encounter difficulty, and deſires which, if they are indulged too often will ſhake off the authority of reaſon, and range capriciouſly from one object to another.

The diſpoſition to defer every important deſign to a time of leiſure, and a ſtate of ſettled uniformity, proceeds generally from a falſe eſtimate of the human powers. If we except thoſe gigantick and ſtupendous intelligences who are ſaid to graſp a ſyſtem by intuition, and bound forward from one ſeries of concluſions to another, without regular ſteps through intermediate propoſitions, the moſt ſucceſsful ſtudents make their advances in knowledge by ſhort flights, between each of which the mind may lie at reſt. For every ſingle act of progreſſion a ſhort time is ſufficient;

cient; and it is only neceſſary, that whenever that time is afforded, it be well employed.

FEW minds will be long confined to ſevere and laborious meditation; and when a ſucceſsful attack on knowledge has been made, the ſtudent recreates himſelf with the contemplation of his conqueſt, and forbears another incurſion, till the new-acquired truth has become familiar, and his curioſity calls upon him for freſh gratifications. Whether the time of intermiſſion is ſpent in company, or in ſolitude, in neceſſary buſineſs, or in voluntary levities, the underſtanding is equally abſtracted from the object of enquiry; but, perhaps, if it be detained by occupations leſs pleaſing, it returns again to ſtudy with greater alacrity, than when it is glutted with ideal pleaſures, and ſurfeited with intemperance of application. He that will not ſuffer himſelf to be diſcouraged by fancied impoſſibilities, may ſometimes find his abilities invigorated by the neceſſity of exerting them in ſhort intervals, as the force of a current is encreaſed by the contraction of its chanel.

FROM ſome cauſe like this, it has probably proceeded,

proceeded, that among thoſe who have contributed to the advancement of learning, many have riſen to eminence in oppoſition to all the obſtacles, which external circumſtances could place in their way, amidſt the tumult of buſineſs, the diſtreſſes of poverty, or the diſſipations of a wandering and unſettled ſtate. A great part of the life of *Eraſmus* was one continual peregrination; ill ſupplied with the gifts of fortune, and led from city to city, and from kingdom to kingdom, by the hopes of patrons and preferment, hopes which always flattered and always deceived him; he yet found means by unſhaken conſtancy, and a vigilant improvement of thoſe hours, which, in the midſt of the moſt reſtleſs activity, will remain unengaged, to write more than another in the ſame condition would have hoped to read. Compelled by want to attendance and ſolicitation, and ſo much verſed in common life, that he has tranſmitted to us the moſt perfect delineation of the manners of his age, he joined to his knowledge of the world, ſuch application to books, that he will ſtand for ever in the firſt rank of literary heroes. How this proficiency was obtained he ſufficiently diſcovers, by informing

forming us, that the *Praiſe of Folly*, one of his moſt celebrated performances, was compoſed by him on the road to *Italy*; *ne totum illud tempus quo equo fuit inſidendum, illiteratis fabulis tereretur*, leſt the hours which he was obliged to ſpend on horſeback, ſhould be tattled away without regard to literature.

AN *Italian* philoſopher expreſſed in his motto, that *time was his eſtate*; an eſtate, indeed, which will produce nothing without cultivation, but will always abundantly repay the labours of induſtry, and generally ſatisfy the moſt extenſive deſires, if no part of it be ſuffered to lie waſte by negligence, to be over-run with noxious plants, or laid out for ſhew rather than for uſe.

NUMB. 109. TUESDAY, *April* 2, 1751.

Gratum eſt, quod patriæ civem, populoque dediſti,
Si facis ut patriæ ſit idoneus, utilis agris,
Utilis et bellorum et pacis rebus agendis.
Plurimum enim intererit, quibus artibus, et quibus hunc tu
Moribus inſtituas. JUV.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH you ſeem to have taken a view ſufficiently extenſive of the miſeries of life, and have employed much of your ſpeculation on mournful ſubjects, you have not yet exhauſted the whole ſtock of human infelicity. There is ſtill a ſpecies of wretchedneſs which eſcapes your obſervation, though it might ſupply you with many ſage remarks, and ſalutary cautions.

I CANNOT but imagine the ſtart of attention awakened by this welcome hint; and at this inſtant ſee the rambler ſnuffing his candle, rubbing his ſpectacles, ſtirring his fire, locking

ing out interruption, and ſettling himſelf in his eaſy chair, that he may enjoy a new calamity without diſturbance. For, whether it be, that continued ſickneſs or misfortune has acquainted you only with the bitterneſs of being; or that you imagine none but yourſelf able to diſcover what I ſuppoſe has been ſeen and felt by all the inhabitants of the world: whether you intend your writings as antidotal to the levity and merriment with which your rivals endeavour to attract the favour of the publick; or fancy that you have ſome particular powers of dolorous declamation, and *warble out your groans* with uncommon elegance or energy; it is certain, that, whatever be your ſubject, melancholy for the moſt part burſts in upon your ſpeculation, your gaiety is quickly overcaſt, and though your readers may be flattered with hopes of pleaſantry, they are ſeldom diſmiſſed but with heavy hearts.

THAT I may therefore gratify you with an imitation of your own ſyllables of ſadneſs, I will inform you that I was condemned by ſome diſaſtrous influence to be an only ſon, born to the apparent proſpect of a large for-

tune, and allotted to my parents at that time of life when fatiety of common diverſions allows the mind to indulge parental affection with greater intenſeneſs. My birth was celebrated by the tenants with feaſts, and dances, and bagpipes; congratulations were ſent from every family within ten miles round; and my parents diſcovered in my firſt cries ſuch tokens of future virtue and underſtanding, that they declared themſelves determined to devote the remaining part of life to my happineſs, and the encreaſe of their eſtate.

THE abilities of my father and mother were not perceptibly unequal, and education had given neither much advantage over the other. They had both kept good company, rattled in chariots, glittered in playhouſes, and danced at court, and were both expert in the games that were in their time generally, called in as auxiliaries againſt the intruſion of thought.

WHEN there is ſuch a parity between two perſons aſſociated for life, the dejection which the huſband, if he be not completely ſtupid, muſt always ſuffer for want of ſuperiority, ſinks

ſinks him to ſubmiſſiveneſs. My mamma, therefore, governed the family without controul; and except that my father ſtill retained ſome authority in the ſtables, and now and then, after a ſupernumerary bottle, broke a looking-glaſs or china diſh to prove his ſovereignty, the whole courſe of the year was regulated by her direction, the ſervants received from her all their orders, and the tenants were continued or diſmiſſed at her diſcretion.

She therefore thought herſelf entitled to the ſuperintendence of her ſon's education; and when my father, at the inſtigation of the parſon, faintly propoſed that I ſhould be ſent to ſchool, very poſitively told him, that ſhe would not ſuffer ſo fine a child to be ruined; that ſhe never knew any boys at a grammar-ſchool that could come into a room without bluſhing, or ſit at the table without ſome awkward uneaſineſs; that they were always putting themſelves into danger by boiſterous plays, or vitiating their behaviour with mean company; and that, for her part, ſhe would rather follow me to the grave than ſee me tear my cloaths, and hang down my head, and

ſneak about with dirty ſhoes and blotted fingers, hair unpowdered, and a hat uncocked.

My father, who had no other end in his propoſal than to appear wiſe and manly, ſoon acquieſced, ſince I was not to live by my learning; for, indeed, he had known very few ſtudents that had not ſome ſtiffneſs in their manner. They therefore agreed, that a domeſtick tutor ſhould be procured, and hired an honeſt gentleman of mean converſation and narrow ſentiments, but whom, having paſſed the common forms of literary education, they implicitly concluded qualified to teach all that was to be learned from a ſcholar. He thought himſelf ſufficiently exalted by being placed at the ſame table with his pupil, and had no other view than to perpetuate his felicity by unlimited reverence, and the utmoſt flexibility of ſubmiſſion to all my mother's opinions and caprices. He therefore frequently took away my book, leſt I ſhould mope with too much application, charged me never to write without turning up my ruffles, and generally bruſhed my coat before he diſmiſſed me into the parlour.

He had, indeed, no occaſion to complain of too burdenſome an employment; for my mother very judiciouſly conſidered, that I was not likely to grow politer in his company, and therefore ſuffered me not to paſs any more time in his apartment than my leſſon required. When I was ſummoned to my taſk, ſhe generally enjoined me not to get any of my tutor's ways, who was ſeldom mentioned before me but for practices to be avoided. I was every moment admoniſhed not to lean on my chair, croſs my legs, or ſwing my hands like my tutor; and once my mother very ſeriouſly deliberated upon his total diſmiſſion, becauſe I began, ſhe ſaid, to learn his manner of ſticking on my hat, and had his bend in my ſhoulders, and his totter in my gait.

Such, however, was her care, that I eſcaped all theſe depravities; and when I was only twelve years old, had rid myſelf of every appearance of childiſh diffidence. I was celebrated round the country for the petulance of my remarks, and the quickneſs of my replies; and many a ſcholar five years older than myſelf have I daſhed into confuſion by the ſteadineſs

of my countenance, silenced by my readiness of repartee, and tortured with envy by the address with which I picked up a fan, presented a snuff-box, or received an empty tea-cup.

At thirteen I was so completely skilled in all the niceties of dress, that I could not only enumerate all the variety of silks, and distinguish the product of a *French* loom, but dart my eye through a numerous company, and observe every deviation from the reigning mode. I was universally skilful in all the changes of expensive finery; but, as they say, every one has something to which he is particularly born, was eminently knowing in *Brussels* lace.

The next year saw me advanced to the trust and power of adjusting the ceremonial of an assembly. Every one received his partner from my hand, and to me every stranger applied for introduction. My heart now disdained the instructions of a tutor, who was rewarded with a small annuity for life, and left me qualified, in my own opinion, to govern myself.

In

In a ſhort time I came to *London*, and as my father was well known among the higher claſſes of life, ſoon obtained admiſſion to the moſt ſplendid aſſemblies, and moſt crouded card-tables. Here I found myſelf univerſally careſſed and applauded: the ladies praiſed the fancy of my cloaths, the beauty of my form, and the ſoftneſs of my voice; endeavoured in every place to force themſelves upon my notice; and invited by a thouſand oblique ſolicitations my attendance to the play-houſe, and my ſalutations in the park. I was now happy to the utmoſt extent of my conception; I paſſed every morning in dreſs, every afternoon in viſits, and every night in ſome ſelect aſſemblies, where neither care nor knowledge were ſuffered to moleſt us.

After a few years, however, theſe delights became familiar, and I had leiſure to look round me with more attention. I then found that my flatterers had very little power to relieve the languor of ſatiety, or recreate wearineſs, by varied amuſement; and therefore endeavoured to enlarge the ſphere of my pleaſures, and to try what ſatisfaction might be

found in the ſociety of men. I will not deny the mortification with which I perceived, that every man, whoſe name I had heard mentioned with reſpect, received me with a kind of tenderneſs nearly bordering on compaſſion; and that thoſe whoſe reputation was not well eſtabliſhed, thought it neceſſary to juſtify their underſtandings, by treating me with contempt. One of theſe witlings elevated his creſt, by aſking me in a full coffee-houſe the price of patches; and another whiſpered, that he wondered why miſs *Friſk* did not keep me that afternoon to watch her ſquirrel.

When I found myſelf thus hunted from all maſculine converſation by thoſe who were themſelves barely admitted, I returned to the ladies, and reſolved to dedicate my life to their ſervice and their pleaſure. But I find that I have now loſt my charms. Of thoſe with whom I entered the gay world, ſome are married, ſome have retired, and ſome have ſo much changed their opinion, that they ſcarcely pay any regard to my civilities, if there is any other man in the place. The new flight of beauties to whom I have made addreſſes, ſuffer me to pay the treat, and then titter with boys.

boys. So that I now find myself welcome only to a few grave ladies, who, unacquainted with all that gives either ease or dignity to life, are content to pass their hours between their bed and their cards, without esteem from the old, or reverence from the young.

I CANNOT but think, Mr. RAMBLER, that I have reason to complain; for surely the females ought to pay some regard to the age of him whose youth was passed in endeavours to please them. They that encourage folly in the boy have no right to punish it in the man. Yet I find, that though they lavish their first fondness upon pertness and gaiety, they soon transfer their regard to other qualities, and ungratefully abandon their adorers to dream out their last years in stupidity and contempt.

I am, &c.

FLORENTULUS.

NUMB. 180. SATURDAY, *April* 6, 1751.

At nobis vitæ dominum quærentibus unum
Lux iter est, et clara dies, et gratia simplex.
Spem sequimur, gradimurque fide, fruimurque futuris,
Ad quæ non veniunt præsentis gaudia vitæ,
Nec currunt pariter capta, et capienda voluptas.

PRUDENTIUS.

THAT to please the Lord and Father of the universe, is the supreme interest of created and dependent beings, as it is easily proved, has been universally confessed; and since all rational agents are conscious of having neglected or violated those duties which are prescribed to them, the fear of being deserted, rejected, or punished by God, has always burdened and oppressed the human mind. The expiation of crimes, and renovation of the forfeited hopes of divine favour, has therefore constituted a large part of every religion.

THE various methods of propitiation and atonement which fear and folly have discovered, or artifice and interest tolerated in the different parts of the world, however they may sometimes reproach or degrade humanity, at least shew the general consent of all ages and nations in their opinion of the mercy and placability of the divine nature. That God will forgive, may, indeed, be established as the first and fundamental truth of religion; for though the knowledge of his existence is the origin of philosophy, yet, without the belief of his mercy, it would have very little influence upon our moral conduct. There could be no prospect of enjoying the protection or regard of him, whom the least deviation from rectitude made inexorable for ever; and every man would naturally withdraw his thoughts from the contemplation of a Creator, whom he must consider as a governor too pure to be pleased, and too severe to be pacified; as an enemy infinitely wise, and infinitely powerful, whom he could neither deceive, escape, nor resist.

WHERE there is no hope, there can be no

endeavour. A conſtant and unfailing obedience is above the reach of terreſtrial diligence; and therefore the progreſs of life could only have been the natural deſcent of negligent deſpair from crime to crime, had not the univerſal perſuaſion of forgiveneſs to be obtained by proper means of reconciliation recalled thoſe to the paths of virtue whom their paſſions had ſolicited aſide; and animated to new attempts, and firmer perſeverance, thoſe whom difficulty had diſcouraged, or negligence ſurpriſed.

In ages and regions ſo diſjoined from each other, that there can ſcarcely be imagined any communication of ſentiments either by commerce or traſition, has prevailed a general and uniform expectation of propitiating God by corporal auſterities, of anticipating his vengeance by voluntary inflictions, and appeaſing his juſtice by a ſpeedy and chearful ſubmiſſion to a leſs penalty when a greater is incurred.

Incorporated minds will always feel ſome inclination towards exterior acts, and ritual obſervances. Ideas not repreſented by ſenſible objects are fleeting, variable, and evaneſcent.

neſcent. We are not able to judge of the degree of conviction which operated at any particular time upon our own thoughts, but as it is recorded by ſome certain and definite effect. He that reviews his life in order to determine the probability of his acceptance with God, if he could once eſtabliſh the neceſſary proportion between crimes and ſufferings, might ſecurely reſt upon his performance of the expiation; but while ſafety remains the reward only of mental purity, he is always afraid leſt he ſhould decide too ſoon in his own favour; leſt he ſhould not have felt the pangs of true contrition; leſt he ſhould miſtake ſatiety for abhorrence, or imagine that his paſſions are ſubdued when they are only ſleeping.

From this natural and reaſonable diffidence aroſe, in humble and timorous piety, a diſpoſition to confound penance with repentance, to repoſe on human determinations, and to receive from ſome judicial ſentence the ſtated and regular aſſignment of reconciliatory pain. We are never willing to be without reſource; we ſeek in the knowledge of others a ſuccour for our own ignorance, and are ready to truſt

any

any that will undertake to direct us when we have no confidence in ourselves.

This desire to ascertain by some outward marks the state of the soul, and this willingness to calm the conscience by some settled method, have produced, as they are diversified in their effects by various tempers and principles, most of the disquisitions and rules, the doubts and solutions, that have embarrassed the doctrine of repentance, and perplexed tender and flexible minds with innumerable scruples concerning the necessary measures of sorrow, and adequate degrees of self-abhorrence; and these rules corrupted by fraud, or debased by credulity, have, by the common resiliency of the mind from one extreme to another, incited others to an open contempt of all subsidiary ordinances, all prudential caution, and the whole discipline of regulated piety.

Repentance, however difficult to be practised, is, if it be explained without superstition, easily understood. *Repentance is the relinquishment of any practice from the conviction that it has offended God.* Sorrow, and fear, and anxiety, are properly not parts, but adjuncts

junctis of repentance; yet they are so closely connected with it, that they cannot easily be separated; for they not only mark its sincerity but promote its efficacy.

No man commits any act of negligence or obstinacy, by which his present safety or happiness is endangered, without feeling the pungency of remorse. He who is fully convinced, that he suffers by his own failure, can never forbear to trace back his miscarriage to its first cause, to image to himself a contrary behaviour, and to form involuntary resolutions against the like fault, even when he knows that he shall never again have the power of committing it. No man finds himself in danger without such trepidations of impatience as leave all human means of safety behind them: he that has once caught an alarm of terror, is every moment seized with useless anxieties, always adding one security to another, trembling with sudden doubts, and distracted by the perpetual occurrence of new expedients. If, therefore, he whose crimes have deprived him of the favour of God, can reflect upon his conduct without disturbance, or can at will banish the reflection; if he who considers him-

himself as suspended over the abyss of eternal perdition only by the thread of life, which must soon part by its own weakness, and which the wing of every minute may divide, can cast his eyes round him without shuddering with horror, or panting for security; what can he judge of himself but that he is not yet awaked to sufficient conviction, since every loss is more lamented than the loss of the divine favour, and every danger more dreaded than the danger of final condemnation?

RETIREMENT from the cares and pleasures of the world has been often recommended as useful to repentance. This at least is evident, that every one retires, whenever ratiocination and recollection are required on other occasions: and surely the retrospect of life, the disentanglement of actions complicated with innumerable circumstances, and diffused in various relations, the discovery of the primary movements of the heart, and the extirpation of lusts and appetites deeply rooted, and widely spread, may be allowed to demand some secession from sport and noise, and business and folly. Some suspension of common affairs, some pause of temporal pain and pleasure,

pleaſure, is doubtleſs neceſſary to him that deliberates for eternity, who is forming the only plan in which miſcarriage cannot be repaired, and examining the only queſtion in which miſtake cannot be rectified.

Auſterities and mortifications are means by which the mind is invigorated and rouſed, by which the attractions of pleaſure are interrupted, and the chains of ſenſuality are broken. It is obſerved by one of the fathers, that *he who reſtrains himſelf in the uſe of things lawful, will never encroach upon things forbidden.* Abſtinence, if nothing more, is, at leaſt, a cautious retreat from the utmoſt verge of permiſſion, and confers that ſecurity which cannot be reaſonably hoped by him that dares always to hover over the precipice of deſtruction, or delights to approach the pleaſures which he knows it fatal to partake. Auſterity is the proper antidote to indulgence; the diſeaſes of mind as well as body are cured by contraries, and to contraries we ſhould readily have recourſe, if we dreaded guilt as we dread pain.

The completion and ſum of repentance is a change

a change of life. That ſorrow which dictates no caution, that fear which does not quicken our eſcape, that auſterity which fails to rectify our affections, are vain and unavailing. But ſorrow and terror muſt naturally precede reformation; for what other cauſe can produce it? He, therefore, that feels himſelf alarmed by his conſcience, anxious for the attainment of a better ſtate, and afflicted by the memory of his paſt faults, may juſtly conclude, that the great work of repentance is begun, and hope by retirement and prayer, the natural and religious means of ſtrengthening his conviction, to impreſs upon his mind ſuch a ſenſe of the divine preſence, as may overpower the blandiſhments of ſecular delights, and enable him to advance from one degree of holineſs to another, till death ſhall ſet him free from miſery and temptation.

What better can we do, than proſtrate fall
Before him reverent; and there confeſs
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
Wat'ring the ground, and with our ſighs the air

Fre-

Frequenting, ſent from hearts contrite, in ſign
Of ſorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?

NUMB. III. TUESDAY, *April* 9, 1751.

Φρονεῖν γὰρ ὃι ταχεῖς, ὐκ ἀσφαλεῖς.
SOPHOC.

IT has been obſerved, by long experience, that late ſprings produce the greateſt plenty. The delay of blooms and fragrance, of verdure and breezes, is for the moſt part liberally recompenſed by the exuberance and fecundity of the enſuing ſeaſons; the bloſſoms which lie concealed till the year is advanced, and the ſun is high, eſcape thoſe chilling blaſts, and nocturnal froſts, which are often fatal to early luxuriance, prey upon the firſt ſmiles of vernal beauty, deſtroy the feeble principles of vegetable life, intercept the fruit in the gem, and beat down the flowers unopened to the ground.

I AM

I AM afraid there is little hope of perſuading the young and ſprightly part of my readers, upon whom the ſpring naturally forces my attention, to learn from the great proceſs of nature, the difference between diligence and hurry, between ſpeed and precipitation; to proſecute their deſigns with calmneſs, to watch the concurrence of opportunity, and endeavour to find the lucky moment which they cannot make. Youth is the time of enterprize and hope; having yet had no occaſion of comparing our force with any oppoſing power, we naturally form preſumptions in our own favour, and imagine that obſtruction and impediment will give way before us. The firſt repulſes rather inflame vehemence than teach prudence; a brave and generous mind is long before it ſuſpects its own weakneſs, or ſubmits to ſap the difficulties which it purpoſed to ſubdue by ſtorm, and expected to overbear in the violence of its courſe. Before diſappointments have enforced the dictates of philoſophy, we believe it in our power to ſhorten the interval between the firſt cauſe and the laſt effect; we laugh at the timorous delays of plodding induſtry, and

fancy

fancy that by encreasing the fire, we can at pleasure accelerate the projection.

At our entrance into the world, when health and vigour give us fair promises of time sufficient for the regular maturation of all our schemes, and a long enjoyment of all our acquisitions, we are eager to seize the present moment, to pluck every gratification within our reach without suffering it to ripen into perfection, and to croud all the varieties of delight into a narrow compass: but age seldom fails to change our conduct; we grow commonly negligent of time in proportion as we have less remaining, and suffer the last part of life to steal from us in languid preparations for some future undertaking, or in slow approaches to some remote advantage, in weak hopes of some fortuitous occurrence, or in drowsy equilibrations of undetermined counsel. Whether it be that the aged, having tasted the pleasures of man's condition, and found them false and delusive, become less anxious for their attainment; or that frequent miscarriages have depressed them to despair, and frozen them to inactivity; or that, like all other objects of terror, death shocks them more

more as it advances upon them, and they are afraid of reminding themselves of their decay, or to discover to their own hearts, that the time of trifling is past.

A PERPETUAL conflict with our natural desires seems to be the lot of our present state. In youth we require something of the tardiness and frigidity of age; and in age, we must labour to recal the fire and impetuosity of youth; in youth we must learn to expect, and in age to enjoy.

THE torment of expectation is, indeed, not easily to be born at a time when every idea of gratification fires the blood, and flashes on the fancy; when the heart is vacant to every fresh form of delight, and has no rival engagements to withdraw it from the importunities of a new desire. Yet since the fear of missing what we seek must always be proportionable to the advantage that we expect from possessing it, the passions, even in this tempestuous state, might be somewhat moderated and restrained by frequent inculcation of the mischief of temerity, and the ha-

zard

said of losing that which we endeavour to seize before our time.

He that too early aspires to honours, must resolve to encounter not only the opposition of interest, but the malignity of envy. He that is too eager to be rich, generally endangers his fortune in wild adventures, and uncertain projects; and he that hastens too speedily to reputation, often endeavours to support his character by artifices and fallacies, decks himself in colours which quickly fade, or in plumes which accident may shake off, or competition pluck away.

The uncertainty and danger of early eminence has been extended by some, even to the gifts of nature; and an opinion has been long conceived, that quickness of invention, accuracy of judgment, or extent of knowledge, appearing in an uncommon degree before the usual time, presage a short life. Even those who are less inclined to form general conclusions, from instances which by their own nature must be rare, have yet been inclined to prognosticate no suitable progress from the first sallies of rapid wits; but have observed,

observed, that after a short effort they either loiter or faint, and suffer themselves to be surpassed by the equal and regular perseverance of slower understandings.

It, indeed, frequently happens, that applause abates diligence. He that finds himself to have performed more than was demanded, is contented to spare the labour of unnecessary performances, and sits down to enjoy at ease his superfluities of honour. He whom success has made confident of his abilities, easily allows himself the privilege of negligence, and looks contemptuously on the gradual advances of a rival, whom he imagines himself able to leave behind him whenever he shall again summon his force to the contest. But long intervals of pleasure dissipate attention, and weaken constancy; nor is it easy for him that has sunk from diligence into sloth to rouse out of his lethargy, to recollect his notions, rekindle his curiosity, and engage with his former ardour in the toils of study.

Even that friendship which intends the reward of genius, too often tends to obstruct it. The pleasure of being caressed, distinguished,

guiſhed, and admired, eaſily ſeduces the ſtudent from literary ſolitude. He is ready to follow the call which ſummons him to hear his own praiſe, and which, perhaps, at once flatters appetites with certainty of pleaſures, and his ambition with hopes of patronage; pleaſures which he conceives inexhauſtible, and hopes which he has not yet learned to diſtruſt.

THESE evils, indeed, are by no means to be imputed to nature, or to be conſidered as inſeparable from an early diſplay of uncommon abilities. They may be certainly eſcaped by prudence and reſolution, and muſt therefore be recounted rather as conſolations to thoſe who are leſs liberally endowed, than as diſcouragements to ſuch as are born with uncommon qualities. Beauty is well known to draw after it the perſecutions of impertinence, to incite the artifices of envy, and to raiſe the flames of unlawful love; yet among the ladies whom prudence or modeſty have made moſt eminent, who has ever complained of the inconveniencies or the dangers of an amiable form? or who would have purchaſed ſafety by the loſs of beauty?

NEITHER grace of perſon, nor vigour of underſtanding, are to be regarded otherwiſe than as bleſſings, as means of happineſs indulged by the Supreme Beneſactor; but the advantages of either may be loſt by too much eagerneſs to obtain them. A thouſand beauties in their firſt bloſſom, by an imprudent expoſure to the open world, have ſuddenly withered at the blaſt of infamy; and men who might have ſubjected new regions to the empire of learning have been lured by the praiſe of their firſt productions from academical retirement, and waſted their days in vice and dependence. The virgin who too ſoon aſpires to celebrity and conqueſt, periſhes by childiſh vanity, ignorant credulity, or guiltleſs indiſcretion. The genius who catches at laurels and preferment before his time, mocks the hopes that he had excited, and loſes thoſe years which might have been moſt uſefully employed, the years of youth, of ſpirit, and vivacity.

IT is one of the innumerable abſurdities of pride, that we are never more impatient of direction, than in that part of life when we need

nred it moſt; we are in haſte to meet enemies whom we have not ſtrength to overcome, and to undertake taſks which we cannot perform: and as he that once miſcarries, does not eaſily perſuade mankind to favour or obſerve another attempt, an ineffectual ſtruggle for fame is often followed by perpetual obſcurity.

NUMB. 112. SATURDAY, *April* 13, 1751.

In mea veſanas habui diſpendia vires,
Et valui pœnas fortis in ipſe meas. OVID.

WE are taught by *Celſus*, that health is beſt preſerved by avoiding ſettled habits of life, and deviating ſometimes into ſlight aberrations from the ſtrict laws of medicine by varying the proportions of food and exerciſe, interrupting the ſucceſſions of reſt and labour, and mingling hardſhips with indulgence. The body, long accuſtomed to ſtated quantities, and uniform periods, is ſoon diſordered by the ſmalleſt irregularity; and ſince we cannot exempt ourſelves wholly from the

power of accident, nor adjuſt every day by the balance or barometer, but muſt ſometimes depart from rigid accuracy in compliance with neceſſary affairs, or ſtrong inclinations; he that too long obſerves nice punctualities, and condemns himſelf to voluntary imbecillity, will not long eſcape the miſeries of diſeaſe.

THE ſame laxity of regimen is equally neceſſary to intellectual health, to a conſtant enjoyment of gaiety, and perpetual ſuſceptibility of occaſional pleaſure. He that by long confinement to the ſame company whom perhaps ſimilitude of taſte brought firſt together, has been accuſtomed to hear only the echo of his own ſentiments, quickly contracts his faculties, and makes a thouſand things offenſive that are in themſelves indifferent; he ſoon bars all the common avenues of delight, and has no part in the general diverſions or gratifications of mankind.

IN things which are not immediately ſubject to religious or moral conſideration, it is dangerous to be too long or too rigidly in the right. Senſibility may, by an inceſſant atten-

tion

tion to elegance and propriety, be quickened to a tenderneſs inconſiſtent with the condition of humanity, irritable by the ſmalleſt aſperity, and vulnerable by the gentleſt touch. He that pleaſes himſelf too much with minute exactneſs, and ſubmits to endure nothing in accommodations attendance, or addreſs, below the utmoſt point of perfection, will, whenever he enters the croud of life, be haraſſed with innumerable diſtreſſes, from which thoſe who have not in the ſame manner encreaſed their ſenſations find no diſturbance. His exotick ſoftneſs will ſhrink at the coarſeneſs of vulgar felicity, like a plant tranſplanted to northern nurſeries, from the dews and ſunſhine of the tropical regions.

There will always be a wide interval between practical and ideal excellence; and he, therefore, that allows not himſelf to be ſatisfied while he can perceive any error or defect, muſt refer his hopes of eaſe to ſome other period of exiſtence. It is well known, that, expoſed to a microſcope, the ſmootheſt poliſh of the moſt ſolid bodies diſcovers cavities and prominences; and that the ſofteſt bloom of roſeate virginity repels the eye with excreſ-

cences and diſcolorations. The perceptions as well as the ſenſes may be improved to our own diſquiet, and we may, by diligent cultivation of the powers of diſlike, raiſe in time an artificial faſtidiouſneſs, which ſhall fill the imagination with phantoms of turpitude, ſhew us the naked ſkeleton of every delight, and preſent us only with the pains of pleaſure, and the deformities of beauty.

PEEVISHNESS, indeed, would perhaps very little diſturb the peace of mankind, were it always the conſequence of ſuperfluous delicacy; for it is the privilege only of deep reflection, or lively fancy, to deſtroy happineſs by art and refinement. But by a continual indulgence of a particular humour, or by a long enjoyment of undiſputed ſuperiority, the dull and thoughtleſs may likewiſe acquire the power of tormenting themſelves and others, and become ſufficiently ridiculous or hateful, to thoſe who are within ſight of their conduct, or reach of their influence.

THEY that have grown old in a ſingle ſtate are generally found to be moroſe, fretful, and captious; tenacious of their own practices and maxims;

maxims; ſoon offended by contradiction or negligence; and impatient of any aſſociation, but with ſuch as will watch their nod, give up all claim to choice and reaſon, and ſubmit themſelves to unlimited authority. Such is the effect of having lived without the neceſſity of conſulting any inclination but their own.

THE iraſcibility of this claſs of tyrants is generally exerted upon petty provocations, ſuch as are incident to underſtandings not far extended beyond the inſtincts of animal life; but unhappily he that fixes his attention on things always before him, will never have long ceſſations of anger. There are many veterans of luxury, upon whom every noon brings a paroxyſm of violence, fury, and execration; they never ſit down to their dinner without finding the meat ſo injudiciouſly bought, or ſo unſkilfully dreſſed, ſuch blunders in the ſeaſoning, or ſuch improprieties in the ſawce, as can ſcarcely be expiated without blood; and, in the tranſports of reſentment, make very little diſtinctions between guilt and innocence, but let fly their menaces, or growl out their diſcontent upon all whom fortune expoſes to the ſtorm.

It is not eaſy to imagine a more unhappy condition than that of dependence on a peeviſh man. In every other ſtate of inferiority the certainty of pleaſing is perpetually increaſed by a fuller knowledge of our duty; and kindneſs and confidence are ſtrengthened by every new act of truſt, and proof of fidelity. But peeviſhneſs ſacrifices to a momentary offence the obſequiouſneſs or uſefulneſs of half a life, and as more is performed encreaſes her exactions.

Chrysalus gained a fortune by trade, and retired into the country; and, having a brother burdened by the number of his children, adopted one of his ſons. The boy was diſmiſſed with many prudent admonitions; informed of his father's inability to maintain him in his native rank; cautioned againſt all oppoſition to the opinions or precepts of his uncle; and animated to perſeverance by the hopes of ſupporting the honour of the family, and overtopping his elder brother. He had a natural ductility of mind, without much warmth of affection, or elevation of ſentiment; and therefore readily complied with every variety of caprice;

caprice; patiently endured contradictory reproofs; heard falſe accuſations without pain, and opprobrious reproaches without reply; laughed obſtreperouſly at the ninetieth repetition of a joke; aſked queſtions about the univerſal decay of trade; admired the ſtrength of thoſe heads by which the price of ſtocks is changed and adjuſted; and behaved with ſuch prudence and circumſpection, that after ſix years the will was made, and *Juvenculus* was declared heir. But unhappily, a month afterwards, retiring at night from his uncle's chamber, he left the door open behind him: the old man tore his will, and being then preceptibly delining, for want of time to deliberate, left his money to a trading company.

When female minds are imbittered by age or ſolitude, their malignity is generally exerted in a rigorous and ſpiteful ſuperintendence of domeſtic trifles. *Eriphile* has employed her eloquence for twenty years upon the degeneracy of ſervants, the naſtineſs of her houſe, the ruin of her furniture, the difficulty of preſerving tapeſtry from the moths, and the careleſneſs of the ſluts whom ſhe employs in bruſhing it. It is her buſineſs every

morning to visit all the rooms, in hopes of finding a chair without its cover, a window shut or open contrary to her orders, a spot on the hearth, or a feather on the floor, that the rest of the day may be justifiably spent in taunts of contempt, and vociferations of anger. She lives for no other purpose but to preserve the neatness of a house and gardens, and feels ther inclination to pleasure, nor aspiration after virtue, while she is engrossed by the great employment of keeping gravel from grass, and wainscot from dust. Of three amiable nieces she has declared herself an irreconcileable enemy to one, because she broke off a tulip with her hoop; to another, because she spilt her coffee on a turkey carpet; and to the third, because she let a wet dog run into the parlour. She has broken off her intercourse of visits, because company makes a house dirty; and resolves to confine herself more to her own affairs, and to live no longer in mire by foolish lenity and indulgence.

Peevishness is generally the vice of narrow minds, and, except when it is the effect of anguish and disease, by which the resolution is broken, and the mind made too feeble

to

to bear the lightest additions to its miseries, proceeds from an unreasonable persuasion of the importance of trifles. The proper remedy against it is, to consider the dignity of human nature, and the folly of suffering perturbation and uneasiness from failures unworthy of our notice.

He that resigns his peace to little casualties, and suffers the course of his life to be interrupted by fortuitous inadvertencies, or trivial offences, delivers up himself to the direction of the wind, and loses all that constancy and equanimity which constitute the chief praise of a wise man.

The province of prudence lies between the greatest things and the least; some surpass our power by their magnitude, and some escape our notice by their number and their frequency. But the indispensable business of life will afford sufficient exercise to every understanding; and such is the limitation of the human powers, that by attention to trifles we must let things of importance pass unobserved: when we examine a mite with a glass, we see nothing but a mite.

THAT it is every man's intereſt to be pleaſed, will need little proof: that it is his intereſt to pleaſe others, experience will inform him. It is therefore not leſs neceſſary to happineſs than to virtue, that he rid his mind of paſſions which make him uneaſy to himſelf, and hateful to the world, which enchain his intellects, and obſtruct his improvement.

NUMB. 113. TUESDAY, *April* 16, 1751.

——*Uxorem, Poſthume, ducis?*
Dic, quâ Tiſiphone, quibus exagitare colubris?
JUVENALIS.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

I Know not whether it is always a proof of innocence to treat cenſure with contempt. We owe ſo much reverence to the wiſdom of mankind, as juſtly to wiſh, that our own opinion of our merit may be ratified by the concurrence of other ſuffrages; and ſince guilt and infamy muſt have the ſame effect

fect upon intelligences unable to pierce beyond external appearance, and influenced often rather by example than precept, we are obliged to refute a falſe charge, leſt we ſhould countenance the crime which we have never committed. To turn away from an accuſation with ſupercilious ſilence, is equally in the power of him that is hardened by villainy, and inſpirited by innocence. The wall of braſs which *Horace* erects upon a clear conſcience, may be ſometimes raiſed by impudence or power; and we ſhould always wiſh to preſerve the dignity of virtue by adorning her with graces which wickedneſs cannot aſſume.

For this reaſon I have determined no longer to endure, with either patient or ſullen reſignation, a reproach, which is, at leaſt in my opinion, unjuſt; but will lay my caſe honeſtly before you, that you or your readers may at length decide it.

Whether you will be able to preſerve your boaſted impartiality, when you hear, that I am conſidered as an adverſary by half the female world, you may ſurely pardon me for doubting, notwithſtanding the veneration to which you may imagine yourſelf entitled

titled by your age, your learning, your abſtraction, or your virtue. Beauty, Mr. RAMBLER, has often overpowered the reſolutions of the firm, and the reaſonings of the wiſe, rouſed the old to ſenſibility, and ſubdued the rigorous to ſoftneſs.

I AM one of thoſe unhappy beings, who have been marked out as huſbands for many different women, and deliberated a hundred times on the brink of matrimony. I have diſcuſſed all the nuptial preliminaries ſo often, that I can repeat the forms in which jointures are ſettled, pin-money ſecured, and proviſions for younger children aſcertained; but am at laſt doomed by general conſent to everlaſting ſolitude, and excluded by an irreverſible decree from all hopes of connubial felicity. I am pointed out by every mother, as a man whoſe viſits cannot be admitted without reproach; who raiſes hopes only to embitter diſappointment, and makes offers only to ſeduce girls into a waſte of that part of life, in which they might gain advantageous matches, and become miſtreſſes and mothers.

I HOPE you will think, that ſome part of this penal ſeverity may juſtly be remitted, when

when I inform you, that I never yet profeſſed love to a woman without ſincere intentions of marriage; that I have never continued an appearance of intimacy from the hour that my inclination changed, but to preſerve her whom I was leaving from the ſhock of abruptneſs, or the ignominy of contempt; that I always endeavoured to give the ladies an opportunity of ſeeming to diſcard me; and that I never forſook a miſtreſs for larger fortune, or brighter beauty, but becauſe I diſcovered ſome irregularity in her conduct, or ſome depravity in her mind; not becauſe I was charmed by another, but becauſe I was offended by herſelf.

I WAS very early tired of that ſucceſſion of amuſements by which the thoughts of moſt young men are diſſipated and enfeebled, and had not long glittered in the ſplendour of an ample patrimony before I wiſhed for the calm and ſerenity of domeſtick happineſs. Youth is naturally delighted with ſprightlineſs and ardour, and therefore I breathed out the ſighs of my firſt affection at the feet of the gay, the ſparkling, the vivacious *Ferocula*. I fancied to myſelf a perpetual ſource of happineſs in wit never exhauſted, and ſpirit never depreſſ-

ed;

ed; looked with veneration on her readineſs of expedients, contempt of difficulty, aſſurance of addreſs, and promptitude of reply; conſidered her as exempt by ſome prerogative of nature from the weakneſs and timidity of female minds; and congratulated myſelf upon a companion ſuperior to all common troubles and embarraſſments. I was, indeed, ſomewhat diſturbed by the unſhaken perſeverance with which ſhe enforced her demands of an unreaſonable ſettlement; but ſhould have conſented to paſs my life in her arms, had not my curioſity led me to a croud gathered in the ſtreet, where I found *Ferocula*, in the preſence of hundreds, diſputing for ſix-pence with a chairman. I ſaw her in ſo little need of aſſiſtance, that it was no breach of the laws of chivalry to forbear interpoſition, and I ſpared myſelf therefore the ſhame of owning her acquaintance. I forgot ſome point of ceremony at our next interview, and ſoon provoked her to forbid me her preſence.

My next attempt was upon a lady of great eminence for learning and philoſophy. I had frequently obſerved the barrenneſs and uniformity of connubial converſation, and therefore

ſore thought highly of my own prudence and diſcernment when I ſelected from a multitude of wealthy beauties, the deep-read *Miſotheа*, who declared herſelf the inexorable enemy of ignorant pertneſs, and puerile levity; and ſcarcely condeſcended to make tea, but for the linguiſt, the geometrician, the aſtronomer, or the poet. The queen of the *Amazons* was only to be gained by the hero who could conquer her in ſingle combat; and *Miſotheа*'s heart was only to bleſs the ſcholar who could overpower her by diſputation. Amidſt the fondeſt tranſports of courtſhip ſhe could call for a definition of terms, and treated every argument with contempt that could not be reduced to regular ſyllogiſm. You may eaſily imagine, that I wiſhed this courtſhip at an end; but when I deſired her to ſhorten my torments, and fix the day of my felicity, we were led into a long converſation, in which *Miſotheа* endeavoured to demonſtrate the folly of attributing choice and ſelf-direction to any human being. It was not difficult to diſcover the danger of committing myſelf for ever to the arms of one who might at any time miſtake the dictates of paſſion, or the calls of appetite, for the decree of fate; or

conſider

conſider cuckoldom as neceſſary to the general ſyſtem, as a link in the everlaſting chain of ſucceſſive cauſes. I therefore told her, that deſtiny had ordained us to part; and that nothing ſhould have torn me from her but the talons of neceſſity.

I THEN ſolicited the regard of the calm, the prudent, the œconomical *Sophronia*, a lady who conſidered wit as dangerous, and learning as ſuperfluous; and thought that the woman who kept her houſe clean, and her accounts exact, took receipts for every payment, and could find them at a ſudden call, enquired nicely after the condition of the tenants, read the price of ſtocks once a week, and purchaſed every thing at the beſt market, could want no accompliſhments neceſſary to the happineſs of a wiſe man. She diſcourſed with great ſolemnity on the care and vigilance which the ſuperintendance of a family demands; obſerved how many were ruined by confidence in ſervants; and told me, that ſhe never expected honeſty but from a ſtrong cheſt, and that the beſt ſtorekeeper was the miſtreſs's eye. Many ſuch oracles of generoſity ſhe uttered, and made every day new improve-

improvements in her ſchemes for the regulation of her ſervants, and the diſtribution of her time. I was convinced, that whatever I might ſuffer from *Sophronia*, I ſhould eſcape poverty; and we therefore proceeded to adjuſt the ſettlements according to her own rule, *fair and ſoftly*. But one morning her maid came to me in tears to intreat my intereſt for a reconciliation to her miſtreſs, who had turned her out at night for breaking ſix teeth in a tortoiſe-ſhell comb: ſhe had attended her lady from a diſtant province, and having not lived long enough to ſave much money, was deſtitute among ſtrangers, and though of a good family, in danger of periſhing in the ſtreets, or of being compelled by hunger to proſtitution. I made no ſcruple of promiſing to reſtore her; but upon my firſt application to *Sophronia* was anſwered with an air which called for approbation, that if ſhe neglected her own affairs, I might ſuſpect her of neglecting mine; that the comb ſtood her in three half-crowns; that no ſervant ſhould wrong her twice; and that indeed, ſhe took the firſt opportunity of parting with *Phyllida*, becauſe, though ſhe was honeſt, her conſtitution was bad, and ſhe thought her very likely to fall ſick. Of our

con-

conference I need not tell you the effect; it surely may be forgiven me, if on this occasion I forgot the decency of common forms.

FROM two more ladies I was disengaged by finding, that they entertained my rivals at the same time, and determined their choice by the liberality of our settlements. Another I thought myself justified in forsaking, because she gave my attorney a bribe to favour her in the bargain; another, because I could never soften her to tenderness, till she heard that most of my family had died young; and another, because to encrease her fortune by expectations, she represented her sister as languishing and consumptive.

I SHALL in another letter give the remaining part of my history of courtship. I presume that I should hitherto have injured the majesty of female virtue, had I not hoped to transfer my affection to higher merit.

I am, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

NUMB.

NUMB. 114. SATURDAY, *April* 20, 1751.

Audi;
Nulla unquam de morte hominis cunctatio longa eſt. JUV.

POWER and ſuperiority are ſo flattering and delightful, that, fraught with temptation and expoſed to danger as they are, ſcarcely any virtue is ſo cautious, or any prudence ſo timorous, as to decline them. Even thoſe that have moſt reverence for the laws of right, are pleaſed with ſhewing that not fear, but choice, regulates their behaviour; and would be thought to comply, rather than obey. We love to overlook the boundaries which we do not wiſh to paſs; and, as the *Roman* ſatiriſt remarks, he that has no deſign to take the life of another, is yet glad to have it in his hands.

FROM the ſame principle, tending yet more to degeneracy and corruption, proceeds the deſire of inveſting lawful authority with terror, and governing by force rather than perſuaſion. Pride is unwilling to believe the neceſſity

neceſſity of aſſigning any other reaſon than her own will; and would rather maintain the moſt equitable claims by violence and penalties, than deſcend from the dignity of command to diſpute and expoſtulation.

It may, I think, be ſuſpected, that this political pride has ſometimes found its way into legiſlative aſſemblies, and mingled with deliberations upon property and life. A ſlight peruſal of the laws by which the meaſures of vindictive and coercive juſtice are eſtabliſhed, will diſcover ſo many diſproportions between crimes and puniſhments, ſuch capricious diſtinctions of guilt, and ſuch confuſion of remiſſneſs and ſeverity, as can ſcarcely be believed to have been produced by publick wiſdom, ſincerely and calmly ſtudious of publick happineſs.

The learned, the judicious, the pious *Boerhaave* relates, that he never ſaw a criminal dragged to execution without aſking himſelf, "Who knows whether this man is "not leſs culpable than me?" On the days when the priſons of this city are emptied into the grave, let every ſpectator of the dreadful

ful proceſſion put the ſame queſtion to his own heart. How few among thoſe that croud in thouſands to the legal maſſacre, and look with careleſſneſs, perhaps with triumph, on the utmoſt exacerbations of human miſery, would then be able to return without horror and dejection? For, who can congratulate himſelf upon a life paſſed without ſome act more miſchievous to the peace or proſperity of others, than the theft of a piece of money?

It has been always the practice, when any particular ſpecies of robbery becomes prevalent and common, to endeavour its ſuppreſſion by capital denunciations. Thus, one generation of malefactors is commonly cut off, and their ſucceſſors are frighted into new expedients; the art of thievery is augmented with greater variety of fraud, and ſubtilized to higher degrees of dexterity, and more occult methods of conveyance. The law then renews the perſuit in the heat of anger, and overtakes the offender again with death. By this practice, capital inflictions are multiplied, and crimes very different in their degrees of enormity are equally ſubjected to the ſevereſt

puniſh-

punishment that man has the power of exercising upon man.

THE lawgiver is undoubtedly allowed to estimate the malignity of an offence, not merely by the loss or pain which single acts may produce, but by the general alarm and anxiety arising from the fear of mischief, and insecurity of possession: he therefore exercises the right which societies are supposed to have over the lives of those that compose them, not simply to punish a transgression, but to maintain order, and preserve quiet; he enforces those laws with severity that are most in danger of violation, as the commander of a garrison doubles the guard on that side which is threatened by the enemy.

THIS method has been long tried, but tried with so little success, that rapine and violence are hourly encreasing; yet few seem willing to despair of its efficacy, and of those who employ their speculations upon the present corruption of the people, some propose the introduction of more horrid, lingering, and terrifick punishments; some are inclined to accelerate

accelerate the executions; ſome to diſcourage pardons; and all ſeem to think that lenity has given confidence to wickedneſs, and that we can only be reſcued from the talons of robbery by inflexible rigour, and ſanguinary juſtice.

YET ſince the right of ſetting an uncertain and arbitrary value upon life has been diſputed, and ſince experience of paſt times gives us little reaſon to hope that any reformation will be effected by a periodical havock of our fellow beings, perhaps it will not be uſeleſs to conſider what conſequences might ariſe from relaxations of the law, and a more rational and equitable proportion of penalties to offences.

DEATH is, as one of the ancients obſerves, τὸ τῶν φοβερῶν φοβερώτατον, *of dreadful things the moſt dreadful*; an evil, beyond which, nothing can be threatened by ſublunary power, or feared from human enmity or vengeance. This terror ſhould, therefore, be reſerved as the laſt reſort of authority, as the ſtrongeſt and moſt operative of prohibitory ſanctions, and placed before the treaſure of life, to guard from invaſion what cannot be reſtored. To

equal robbery with murder is to reduce murder to robbery, to confound in common minds the gradations of injury, and incite the commiſſion of a greater crime, to prevent the detection of a leſs. If only murder were puniſhed with death, very few robbers would ſtain their hands in blood; but when, by the laſt act of cruelty no new danger is incurred, and greater ſecurity may probably be obtained, upon what principle ſhall we bid them forbear?

It may be urged, that the ſentence is often mitigated to ſimple robbery; but ſurely this is to confeſs, that our laws are unreaſonable in our own opinion; and, indeed, it may be obſerved, that all but murderers have, at their laſt hour, the common ſenſations of mankind pleading in their favour.

From this conviction of the inequality of the puniſhments to the offence proceeds the frequent ſolicitation of pardons. They who would rejoice at the correction of a thief, are yet ſhocked at the thought of deſtroying him. His crime ſhrinks to nothing compared, with his

his misery; and severity defeats itself by exciting pity.

The gibbet, indeed, certainly disables those who die upon it from infesting the community; but their death seems not to contribute more to the reformation of their associates than any other method of separation. A thief seldom passes much of his time in recollection or anticipation, but from robbery hastens to riot, and from riot to robbery; nor, when the grave closes upon his companion, has any other care than to find another.

The frequency of capital punishments therefore rarely hinders the commission of a crime, but naturally and commonly prevents its detection, and is, if we reason only upon prudential principles, chiefly for that reason to be avoided. Whatever may be urged by casuists or politicians, the greater part of mankind, as they can never think, that to pick the pocket, and to pierce the heart, is equally criminal, will scarcely believe, that two malefactors so different in guilt can be justly doomed to the same punishment; nor is the neces-

ſity of ſubmitting the conſcience to human laws ſo plainly evinced, ſo clearly ſtated, or ſo generally allowed, but that the pious, the tender, and the juſt, will always ſcruple to concur with the community in an act which their private judgment cannot approve.

He who knows not how often rigorous laws produce total impunity, and how many crimes are concealed and forgotten for fear of hurrying the offender to that ſtate in which there is no repentance, has converſed very little with mankind. And whatever epithets of reproach or contempt this compaſſion may incur from thoſe who confound cruelty with firmneſs, I know not whether any wiſe man would wiſh it leſs powerful, or leſs extenſive.

If thoſe whom the wiſdom of our laws has condemned to die, had been detected in their rudiments of robbery, they might by proper diſcipline, and uſeful labour, have been diſentangled from their habits, and by eſcaping all the temptations to ſubſequent crimes, have paſſed their days in reparation, and penitence; and detected they might all have been, had the proſecutors been certain, that their lives would

would have been ſpared. I believe, every thief will confeſs, that he has been more than once ſeized and diſmiſſed; and that he has ſometimes ventured upon capital crimes, becauſe he knew, that thoſe whom he injured would rather connive at his eſcape, than cloud their minds with the horrors of his death.

All laws againſt crimes are ineffectual, unleſs ſome will inform, and ſome will proſecute; but till we mitigate the penalties for mere violations of property, information will always be hated, and proſecution dreaded. The heart of a good man cannot but recoil at the thought of puniſhing a ſlight injury with death; eſpecially when he remembers, that the thief might have procured ſafety by another crime, from which he was reſtrained only by his remaining virtue.

The obligations to aſſiſt the exerciſe of publick juſtice are indeed ſtrong; but they will certainly be overpowered by tenderneſs for life. What is puniſhed with ſeverity contrary to our ideas of adequate retribution, will be ſeldom diſcovered; and multitudes will be ſuffered to advance from crime to crime, till

they deſerve death, becauſe if they had been early proſecuted, they would have ſuffered death before they deſerved it.

THIS ſcheme of invigorating the laws by relaxation, and extirpating wickedneſs by lenity, is ſo remote from common practice, that I might reaſonably fear to expoſe it to the publick, could it be ſupported only by my own obſervations: I ſhall, therefore, by aſcribing it to its author, Sir *Thomas More*, endeavour to procure it that attention, which I wiſh always paid to prudence, to juſtice, and to mercy.

NUMB. 115. TUESDAY, *April* 23, 1751.

Quædam parva quidem, ſed non tolerànda maritis. JUV.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

I Sit down in purſuance of my late engagement to recount the remaining part of the adventures that befel me in my long queſt of conjugal felicity, which, though I have not yet been ſo happy as to obtain it, I have at leaſt endeavoured to deſerve by unwearied diligence, without ſuffering from repeated diſappointments any abatement of my hope or repreſſion of my activity.

YOU muſt have obſerved in the world a ſpecies of mortals who employ themſelves in promoting matrimony, and without any viſible motive of intereſt or vanity, without any diſcoverable impulſe of malice or benevolence,

without any reaſon, but that they want objects of attention, and topicks of converſation, are inceſſantly buſy in procuring wives and huſbands, fill the ears of every ſingle man and woman with ſome convenient match, and when they are informed of your age and fortune, offer a partner of life with the ſame readineſs, and the ſame indifference, as a ſaleſman, when he has taken meaſure by his eye, fits his cuſtomer with a coat.

It might be expected that they ſhould ſoon be diſcouraged from this officious interpoſition by reſentment or contempt; and that every man ſhould determine the choice on which ſo much of his happineſs muſt depend, by his own judgment and obſervation: yet it happens, that as theſe propoſals are generally made with a ſhew of kindneſs, they ſeldom provoke anger, but are at worſt heard with patience, and forgotten. They influence weak minds to approbation; for many are ſure to find in a new acquaintance, whatever qualities report has taught them to expect; and in more powerful and active underſtandings they excite curioſity, and ſometimes by a lucky chance

chance bring perſons of ſimilar tempers within the attraction of each other.

I WAS known to poſſeſs a fortune, and to want a wife; and therefore was frequently attended by theſe hymeneal ſolicitors, with whoſe importunity I was ſometimes diverted, and ſometimes perplexed; for they contended for me as vulturs for a carcaſe; each employed all his eloquence, and all his artifices, to enforce and promote his own ſcheme, from the ſucceſs of which he was to receive no other advantage than the pleaſure of defeating others equally eager, and equally induſtrious.

AN invitation to ſup with one of thoſe buſy friends, made me by a concerted chance acquainted with *Camilla*, by whom it was expected, that I ſhould be ſuddenly and irreſiſtibly enſlaved. The lady, whom the ſame kindneſs had brought without her own concurrence into the liſts of love, ſeemed to think me at leaſt worthy of the honour of captivity; and exerted the power, both of her eyes and wit, with ſo much art and ſpirit, that though I had been too often deceived by appearances to devote myſelf irrevocably at the firſt inter-

view, yet I could not ſuppreſs ſome raptures of admiration, and ſtutters of deſire. I was eaſily perſuaded to make nearer approaches; but ſoon diſcovered, that an union with *Camilla* was not much to be wiſhed. *Camilla* profeſſed a boundleſs contempt for the folly, levity, ignorance, and impertinence of her own ſex; and very frequently expreſſed her wonder, that men of learning or experience could ſubmit to trifle away life, with beings incapable of ſolid thought. In mixed companies, ſhe always aſſociated with the men, and declared her ſatisfaction when the ladies retired. If any ſhort excurſion into the country was propoſed, ſhe commonly inſiſted upon the excluſion of women from the party; becauſe, where they were admitted, the time was waſted in frothy compliments, weak indulgences, and idle ceremonies. To ſhew the greatneſs of her mind, ſhe avoided all compliance with the faſhion; and to boaſt the profundity of her knowledge, miſtook the various textures of ſilk, confounded tabbies with damaſks, and ſent for ribbands by wrong names. She deſpiſed the commerce of ſtated viſits, a farce of empty form without inſtruction; and congratulated herſelf, that ſhe never learned

learned the low ſtile of meſſage-cards. She often applauded the noble ſentiment of *Plato*, who rejoiced that he was born a man rather than a woman; proclaimed her approbation of *Swift*'s opinion, that women are only a higher ſpecies of monkies; and confeſſed, that when ſhe conſidered the behaviour, or heard the converſation, of her ſex, ſhe could not but forgive the *Turks* for ſuſpecting them to want ſouls.

It was the joy and pride of *Camilla* to have provoked, by this inſolence, all the rage of hatred, and all the perſecutions of calumny; nor was ſhe ever more elevated with her own ſuperiority, than when ſhe talked of female anger, and female cunning. Well, ſays ſhe, has nature provided that ſuch virulence ſhould be diſabled by folly, and ſuch cruelty be reſtrained by impotence.

Camilla doubtleſs expected, that what ſhe loſt on one ſide, ſhe ſhould gain on the other; and imagined that every male heart would be open to a lady, who made ſuch generous advances to the borders of virility. But man, ungrateful man, inſtead of ſpringing forward to meet her, ſhrunk back at her ap-

proach. She was perſecuted by the ladies as a deſerter, and at beſt received by the men only as a fugitive. I, for my part, amuſed myſelf a while with her ſopperies, but novelty ſoon gave way to deteſtation, for nothing out of the common order of nature can be long borne. I had no inclination to a wife who had the ruggedneſs of man without his force, and the ignorance of woman without her ſoftneſs; nor could I think it my quiet and honour to be truſted to ſuch audacious virtue as was hourly courting danger, and ſoliciting aſſault.

My next miſtreſs was *Nitella*, a lady of gentle mien, and ſoft voice, always ſpeaking to approve, and ready to receive direction from thoſe with whom chance had brought her into company. In *Nitella* I promiſed myſelf an eaſy friend, with whom I might loiter away the day without diſturbance or altercation. I therefore ſoon reſolved to addreſs her, but was diſcouraged from proſecuting my courtſhip by obſerving, that her apartments were ſuperſtitiouſly regular; and that, unleſs ſhe had notice of my viſit, ſhe was never to be ſeen. There is a kind of anxious cleanlineſs which I have always noted as the characteriſtick of a

flattern; it is the superfluous scrupulosity of guilt, dreading discovery, and shunning suspicion: it is the violence of an effort against habit, which, being impelled by external motives, cannot stop at the middle point.

NITELLA was always tricked out rather with nicety than with elegance; and seldom could forbear to discover by her uneasiness and constraint, that her attention was burdened, and her imagination engrossed: I therefore concluded, that being only occasionally and ambitiously dressed, she was not familiarized to her own ornaments. There are so many competitors for the fame of cleanliness, that it is not hard to gain information of those that fail, from those that desire to excel: I quickly found, that *Nitella* passed her time between finery and dirt; and was always in a wrapper, night-cap, and slippers, when she was not decorated for immediate shew.

I WAS then led by my evil destiny to *Charybdis*, who never neglected an opportunity of seizing a new prey when it came within her reach. I thought myself quickly made happy by a permission to attend her to publick places; and pleased my own vanity with imagining

imagining the envy which I ſhould raiſe in a thouſand hearts, by appearing as the acknowledged favourite of *Charybdis*. She ſoon after hinted her intention to take a ramble for a fortnight, into a part of the kingdom which ſhe had never ſeen. I ſolicited the happineſs of accompanying her, which, after a ſhort reluctance, was indulged me. She had no other curioſity in her journey, than after all poſſible means of expence; and was every moment taking occaſion to mention ſome delicacy, which I knew it my duty upon ſuch notices to procure.

After our return, being now more familiar, ſhe told me, whenever we met, of ſome new diverſion; at night ſhe had always notice of a charming company that would breakfaſt in the gardens; and in the morning ſhe had been informed of ſome new ſong in the opera, ſome new dreſs at the play-houſe, or ſome performer at a concert whom ſhe longed to hear. Her intelligence was ſuch, that there never was a ſhew, to which ſhe did not ſummon me on the ſecond day; and as ſhe hated a croud, and could not go alone, I was obliged to attend at ſome intermediate hour, and

and pay the price of a whole company. When we paſſed the ſtreets, ſhe was often charmed with ſome trinket in the toy-ſhops; and from moderate deſires of ſeals and ſnuff-boxes, roſe, by degrees, to gold and diamonds. I now began to find the ſmile of *Charybdis* too coſtly for a private purſe, and added one more to ſix and forty lovers, whoſe fortune and patience her rapacity had exhauſted.

IMPERIA then took poſſeſſion of my affections; but kept them only for a ſhort time. She had newly inherited a large fortune, and, having ſpent the early part of her life in the peruſal of romances, brought with her into the gay world all the pride of *Cleopatra*; expected nothing leſs than vows, altars, and ſacrifices; and thought her charms diſhonoured, and her power infringed, by the ſofteſt oppoſition to her ſentiments, or the ſmalleſt tranſgreſſion of her commands. Time might indeed cure this ſpecies of pride in a mind not naturally undiſcerning, and vitiated only by falſe repreſentations; but the operations of time are ſlow; and I therefore left her to grow wiſe at leiſure, or to continue in error at her own expence.

THUS

THUS I have hitherto, in ſpite of myſelf, paſſed my life in frozen celibacy. My friends, indeed, often tell me, that I flatter my imagination with higher hopes than human nature can gratify; that I dreſs up an ideal charmer in all the radiance of perfection, and then enter the world to look for the ſame excellence in corporeal beauty. But ſurely, Mr. RAMBLER, it is not madneſs to hope for ſome terreſtrial lady unſtained with the ſpots which I have been deſcribing; at leaſt, I am reſolved to purſue my ſearch; for I am ſo far from thinking meanly of marriage, that I believe it able to afford the higheſt happineſs decreed to our preſent ſtate; and if after all theſe miſcarriages I find a woman that fills up my expectation, you ſhall hear once more from

Yours, &c.

HYMENÆUS.

NUMB.

NUMB. 116. SATURDAY, *April* 27, 1751.

Optat ephippia bos piger; optat arare caballus.
HOR.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

I Was the ſecond ſon of a country gentleman by the daughter of a wealthy citizen of *London*. My father, having by his marriage freed the eſtate from a heavy mortgage, and paid his ſiſters their portions, thought himſelf diſcharged from all obligation to farther thought, and entitled to ſpend the reſt of his life in rural pleaſures. He therefore ſpared nothing that might contribute to the completion of his felicity; he procured the beſt guns and horſes that the kingdom could ſupply, paid large ſalaries to his groom and huntſman, and became the envy of the county for the diſcipline of his hounds. But above all his other attainments, he was eminent for a breed of pointers

pointers and ſetting dogs, which by long and vigilant cultivation he had ſo much improved, that not a partridge or heathcock could reſt in ſecurity, and game of whatever ſpecies that dared to light upon his manor, was beaten down by his ſhot, or covered with his nets.

My elder brother was very early initiated in the chace, and at an age when other boys are *creeping like ſnails unwillingly to ſchool*, he could wind the horn, beat the buſhes, bound over hedges, and ſwim rivers. When the huntſman one day broke his leg, he ſupplied his place with equal abilities, and came home with the ſcut in his hat, amidſt the acclamations of the whole village. I being either delicate, or timorous, leſs deſirous of honour, or leſs capable of ſylvan heroiſm, was always the favourite of my mother; becauſe I kept my coat clean, and my complexion free from freckles, and did not come home like my brother mired and tanned, nor carry corn in my hat to the horſe, nor bring dirty curs into the parlour.

My mother had not been taught to amuſe herſelf with books, and being much inclined

to

to deſpiſe the ignorance and barbarity of the country ladies, diſdained to learn their ſentiments of converſation, and had made no addition to the notions which ſhe had brought from the precincts of *Cornhill*. She was, therefore, always recounting the glories of the city; enumerating the ſucceſſion of mayors; celebrating the magnificence of the banquets at *Guildhall*; and relating the civilities paid her at the companies feaſts by men, of whom ſome are now made aldermen, ſome have fined for ſheriffs, and none are worth leſs than forty thouſand pounds. She frequently diſplaid her father's greatneſs; told of the large bills which he had paid at ſight; of the ſums for which his word would paſs upon the exchange; the heaps of gold which he uſed on *Saturday* night to toſs about with a ſhovel; the extent of his warehouſe, and the ſtrength of his doors; and when ſhe relaxed her imagination with lower ſubjects, deſcribed the furniture of their country-houſe, or repeated the wit of the clerks and porters.

By theſe narratives I was fired with the ſplendor and dignity of *London*, and of trade. I therefore devoted myſelf to a ſhop, and warmed

warmed my imagination from year to year with enquiries about the privileges of a freeman, the power of the common council, the dignity of a wholesale dealer, and the grandeur of mayoralty, to which my mother assured me that many had arrived who began the world with less than myself.

I was very impatient to enter into a path, which led to such honour and felicity; but was forced for a time to endure some repression of my eagerness, for it was my grandfather's maxim, that *a young man seldom makes much money, who is out of his time before two-and-twenty.* They thought it necessary, therefore, to keep me at home till the proper age, without any other employment than that of learning merchants accounts, and the art of regulating books; but at length the tedious days elapsed, I was transplanted to town, and, with great satisfaction to myself, bound to a haberdasher.

My master, who had no conception of any virtue, merit, or dignity, but that of being rich, had all the good qualities which naturally arise from a close and unwearied attention to the

the main chance: his desire to gain wealth was so well tempered by the vanity of shewing it, that without any other principle of action, he lived in the esteem of the whole commercial world; and was always treated with respect by the only men, whose good opinion he valued or solicited, those who were universally allowed to be richer than himself.

By his instructions I learned in a few weeks to handle a yard with great dexterity, to wind tape neatly upon the ends of my fingers, and to make up parcels with exact frugality of paper and packthread; and soon caught from my fellow apprentices, the true grace of a counter bow, the careless air with which a small pair of scales is to be held between the fingers, and the vigour and sprightliness with which the box, after the ribband has been cut, is returned into its place. Having no desire of any higher employment, and, therefore, applying all my powers to the knowledge of my trade, I was quickly master of all that could be known, became a critick in small wares, contrived new variations of figures, and new mixtures of colours, and was some-

sometimes consulted by the weavers when they projected fashions for the ensuing spring.

With all these accomplishments, in the fourth year of my apprenticeship, I paid a visit to my friends in the country, where I expected to be received as a new ornament of the family, and consulted by the neighbouring gentlemen as a master of pecuniary knowledge, and by the ladies as an oracle of the mode. But unhappily at the first publick table to which I was invited, appeared a student of the temple, and an officer of the guards, who looked upon me with a smile of contempt, which destroyed at once all my hopes of distinction, so that I durst hardly raise my eyes for fear of encountering their superiority of mien. Nor was my courage revived by any opportunities of displaying my knowledge; for the templar entertained the company for part of the day with historical narratives, and political observations; and the colonel afterwards detailed the adventures of a birth-night, told the claims and expectations of the courtiers, and gave an account of assemblies, gardens, and diversions. I, indeed, essayed to fill up a pause in a parliamentary debate with a faint mention of trade,

and

and *Spaniards*; and once attempted with little warmth, to correct a groſs miſtake about a ſilver breaſt-knot; but neither of my antagoniſts ſeemed to think a reply neceſſary; they reſumed their diſcourſe without emotion, and again engroſſed the attention of the company; nor did one of the ladies appear deſirous to know my opinion of her dreſs, or to hear how long the carnation ſhot with white that was then new amongſt them had been antiquated in town.

As I knew that neither of theſe gentlemen had more money than myſelf, I could not diſcover what had depreſſed me in their preſence; nor why they were conſidered by others as more worthy of attention and reſpect; and therefore reſolved, when we met again, to rouſe my ſpirit, and force myſelf into notice. I went very early to the following weekly meeting, and was entertaining a ſmall circle very ſucceſsfully with a minute repreſentation of my lord mayor's ſhew, when the colonel entered careleſs and gay, ſat down with a kind of unceremonious civility, and without appearing to intend any interruption, drew my audience away to the other

part

part of the room, to which I had not the courage to follow them. Soon after came in the lawyer, not indeed with the ſame attractions of mien, but with greater powers of language; and by one or other the company was ſo happily amuſed, that I was neither heard nor ſeen, nor was able to give any other proof of my exiſtence than that I put round the glaſs, and was in my turn permitted to name the toaſt.

My mother indeed endeavoured to comfort me in my vexation, by telling me, that perhaps theſe ſhowy talkers were hardly able to pay every one his own; that he who has money in his pocket needs not care what any man ſays of him; that, if I minded my trade, the time would come when lawyers and ſoldiers would be glad to borrow out of my purſe; and that it is fine, when a man can ſet his hands to his ſides, and ſay he is worth forty thouſand pounds every day of the year. Theſe, and many more ſuch conſolations and encouragements, I received from my good mother, which however did not much allay my uneaſineſs; for, having by ſome accident heard, that the country ladies deſpiſed her as a

cit, I had therefore no longer much reverence for her opinions, but conſidered her as one whoſe ignorance and prejudice had hurried me, though without ill intentions, into a ſtate of meanneſs and ignominy, from which I could not find any poſſibility of riſing to the rank which my anceſtors had always held.

I RETURNED, however, to my maſter, and buſied myſelf among thread, and ſilk, and laces, but without my former chearfulneſs or alacrity. I had now no longer any felicity in contemplating the exact diſpoſition of my powdered curls, the equal plaits of my ruffles, or the gloſſy blackneſs of my ſhoes; nor heard with my former elevation thoſe compliments which ladies ſometimes condeſcended to pay me upon my readineſs in twiſting a paper, or counting out the change. The term of *Young man*, with which I was ſometimes honoured as I carried a parcel to the door of a coach, tortured my imagination; I grew negligent of my perſon, and ſullen in my temper, often miſtook the demands of the cuſtomers, treated their caprices and objections with contempt, and received and diſmiſſed them with ſurly ſilence.

My maſter was afraid leſt the ſhop ſhould ſuffer by this change of my behaviour, and, therefore, after ſome expoſtulations, poſted me in the warehouſe, and preſerved me from the danger and reproach of deſertion, to which my diſcontent would certainly have urged me, had I continued any longer behind the counter.

In the ſixth year of my ſervitude my brother died of drunken joy, for having run down a fox that had baffled all the packs in the province. I was now heir, and with the hearty conſent of my maſter commenced gentleman. The adventures in which my new character engaged me ſhall be communicated in another letter, by, Sir,

Yours, &c.

MISOCAPELUS.

NUMB.

NUMB. 117. TUESDAY, *April* 30, 1751.

Ὅσσαν ἐπ' Οὐλύμπῳ μέμασαν θέμεν αὐτὰρ ἐπ' Ὄσσῃ
Πήλιον εἰνοσίφυλλον, ἵν' οὐρανὸς ἀμβατὸς εἴη.

HOM.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

NOTHING has more retarded the advancement of learning than the diſpoſition of vulgar minds to ridicule and vilify what they cannot comprehend. All induſtry muſt be excited by hope; and as the ſtudent often propoſes no other reward to himſelf than praiſe, he is eaſily diſcouraged by contempt and inſult. He who brings with him into a clamorous multitude the timidity of recluſe ſpeculation, and has never hardened his front in publick life, nor accuſtomed his paſſions to the viciſſitudes and accidents, the triumphs and defeats of mixed converſation, will bluſh at the ſtare of petulant incredulity, and ſuffer himſelf to be driven, by a burſt of laughter, from the fortreſſes of demonſtration. The mechaniſt will be afraid to aſſert before hardy contradiction, the poſſibility of tearing down

bulwarks with a silk-worm's thread; and the astronomer of relating the rapidity of light, the distance of the fixed stars, and the height of the lunar mountains.

If I could by any efforts have shaken off this cowardice, I had not sheltered myself under a borrowed name, nor applied to you for the means of communicating to the public the theory of a garret; a subject which, except some slight and transient strictures, has been hitherto neglected by those who were best qualified to adorn it, either for want of leisure to prosecute the various researches in which a nice discussion must necessarily engage them, or because it requires such diversity of knowledge, and such extent of curiosity, as is scarcely to be found in any single intellect; or perhaps others, having more sagacity than myself, foresaw the tumults which would be raised against them, and considering that it was vain to write what they durst not publish, confined their knowledge to their own breasts, and abandoned prejudice and folly to the direction of chance.

That the professors of literature generally reside

reſide in the higheſt ſtories, has been immemorially obſerved. The wiſdom of the ancients was well acquainted with the intellectual advantages of an elevated ſituation: why elſe were the *Muſes* ſtationed on *Olympus* or *Parnaſſus* by thoſe who could with equal right have raiſed them bowers in the vale of *Tempe*, or erected their altars among the flexures of *Meander*? Why was *Jove* himſelf nurſed upon a mountain? or why did the goddeſſes, when the prize of beauty was conteſted, try the cauſe upon the top of *Ida*? Such were the fictions by which the great maſters of the earlier ages endeavoured to inculcate to poſterity the importance of a garret, which, though they had been long obſcured by the negligence and ignorance of ſucceeding times, were well enforced by the celebrated ſymbol of *Pythagoras*, ἀνεμῶν πνέοντων τὴν ἠχὼ προσκύνει; "when "the wind blows, worſhip its echo." This could not but be underſtood by his diſciples as an inviolable injunction to live in a garret, which I have found frequently viſited by the echo and the wind. Nor was the tradition wholly obliterated in the age of *Auguſtus*, for *Tibullus* evidently congratulates him-

ſelf upon his garret, not without ſome alluſion to the *Pythagorean* precept.

Quàm juvat immites ventos audire cubantem—
Aut, gelidas hybernus aquas cùm fuderit auſter,
Securum ſomnos, imbre juvante, ſequi!

And it is impoſſible not to diſcover the fondneſs of *Lucretius*, an earlier writer, for a garret, in his deſcription of the lofty towers of ſerene learning, and of the pleaſure with which a wiſe man looks down upon the confuſed and erratic ſtate of the world moving below him.

Sed nil dulcius eſt, bene quàm munita tenere
Edita doctrinâ ſapientum templa ſerena;
Deſpicere unde queas alios, paſſimq; videre
Errare, atque viam palantes quærere vitæ.

The inſtitution has, indeed, continued to our own time; the garret is ſtill the uſual receptacle of the philoſopher and poet; but this, like many ancient cuſtoms, is perpetuated only by an accidental imitation, without knowledge of the original reaſon for which it was eſtabliſhed. *Cauſa latet; res eſt notiſſima.* Conjectures have, indeed, been advanced concerning theſe habitations of literature, but without

without much ſatisfaction to the judicious enquirer. Some have imagined, that the garret is generally choſen by the wits, as moſt eaſily rented; and concluded that no man rejoices in his aereal abode, but on the days of payment. Others ſuſpect, that a garret is chiefly convenient, as it is remoter than any other part of the houſe from the outer door, which is often obſerved to be infeſted by viſitants, who talk inceſſantly of beer, or linen, or a coat, and repeat the ſame ſounds every morning, and ſometimes again in the afternoon, without any variation, except that they grow daily more importunate and clamorous, and raiſe their voices in time from mournful murmurs to raging vociferations. This eternal monotony is always deteſtable to a man whoſe chief pleaſure is to enlarge his knowledge, and vary his ideas. Others talk of freedom from noiſe, and abſtraction from common buſineſs or amuſements; and ſome, yet more viſionary, tell us that the faculties are inlarged by open proſpects, and that the fancy is more at liberty, when the eye ranges without confinement.

These conveniencies may perhaps all be found in a well choſen garret; but ſurely they

cannot be ſuppoſed ſufficiently important to have operated unvariably upon different climates, diſtant ages, and ſeparate nations. Of an univerſal practice, there muſt ſtill be preſumed an univerſal cauſe, which, however recondite and abſtruſe, may be perhaps reſerved to make me illuſtrious by its diſcovery, and you by its promulgation.

It is univerſally known, that the faculties of the mind are invigorated or weakened by the ſtate of the body, and that the body is in a great meaſure regulated by the various compreſſions of the ambient element. The effects of the air in the production or cure of corporal maladies have been acknowledged from the time of *Hippocrates*; but no man has yet ſufficiently conſidered how far it may influence the operations of the genius, though every day affords inſtances of local underſtanding, of wits and reaſoners, whoſe faculties are adapted to ſome ſingle ſpot, and who, when they are removed to any other place ſink at once into ſilence and ſtupidity. I have diſcovered by a long ſeries of obſervations, that invention and elocution ſuffer great impediments from denſe and impure vapours, and that

that the tenuity of a defecated air at a proper diſtance from the ſurface of the earth, accelerates the fancy, and ſets at liberty thoſe intellectual powers which were before ſhackled by too ſtrong attraction, and unable to expand themſelves under the preſſure of a groſs atmoſphere. I have found dulneſs to quicken into ſentiment in a thin ether, as water, though not very hot, boils in a receiver partly exhauſted; and heads in appearance empty have teemed with notions upon riſing ground, as the flaccid ſides of a football would have ſwelled out into ſtiffneſs and extenſion.

For this reaſon I never think myſelf qualified to judge deciſively of any man's faculties, whom I have only known in one degree of elevation; but take ſome opportunity of attending him from the cellar to the garret, and try upon him all the various degrees of rarefaction and condenſation, tenſion and laxity. If he is neither vivacious aloft, nor ſerious below, I then conſider him as hopeleſs; but as it ſeldom happens, that I do not find the temper to which the texture of his brain is fitted, I accommodate him in time with a tube of mercury, firſt marking the point moſt favour-

able to his intellects, according to rules which I have long ſtudied, and which I may, perhaps, reveal to mankind in a complete treatiſe of barometrical pneumatology.

ANOTHER cauſe of the gaiety and ſprightlineſs of the dwellers in garrets is probably the encreaſe of that vertiginous motion, with which we are carried round by the diurnal revolution of the earth. The power of agitation upon the ſpirits is well known; every man has felt his heart lightened in a rapid vehicle, or on a galloping horſe; and nothing is plainer, than that he who towers to the fifth ſtory, is whirled through more ſpace by every circumrotation, than another that grovels upon the ground-floor. The nations between the tropicks, are known to be fiery, inconſtant, inventive, and fanciful, becauſe, living at the utmoſt length of the earth's diameter, they are carried about with more ſwiftneſs than thoſe whom nature has placed nearer to the poles; and therefore, as it becomes a wiſe man to ſtruggle with the inconveniences of his country, whenever celerity and acuteneſs are requiſite, we muſt actuate our languor by taking a few turns round the center in a garret.

If you imagine that I aſcribe to air and motion effects which they cannot produce, I deſire you to conſult your own memory, and conſider whether you have never known a man acquire reputation in his garret, which, when fortune or a patron had placed him upon the firſt floor, he was unable to maintain; and who never recovered his former vigour of underſtanding till he was reſtored to his original ſituation. That a garret will make every man a wit, I am very far from ſuppoſing; I know there are ſome who would continue blockheads even on the ſummit of the *Andes*, or on the pic of *Teneriffe*. But let not any man be conſidered as unimproveable till this potent remedy has been tried; for perhaps, he was formed to be great only in a garret, as the joiner of *Aretæus* was rational in no other place but his own ſhop.

I THINK a frequent removal to various diſtances from the center ſo neceſſary to a juſt eſtimate of intellectual abilities, and conſequently of ſo great uſe in education, that if I hoped that the public could be perſuaded to ſo expenſive an experiment, I would propoſe,

that there ſhould be a cavern dug, and a tower erected, like thoſe which *Bacon* deſcribes in *Solomon*'s houſe, for the expanſion and concentration of underſtanding, according to the exigence of different employments, or conſtitutions. Perhaps ſome that fume away in meditations upon time and ſpace in the tower, might compoſe tables of intereſt at a certain depth; and he that upon level ground ſtagnates in ſilence, or creeps in narrative, might, at the height of half a mile, ferment into merriment, ſparkle with repartee, and froth with declamation.

ADDISON obſerves that we may find the heat of *Virgil*'s climate, in ſome lines of his *Georgic*: ſo, when I read a compoſition, I immediately determine the height of the author's habitation. As an elaborate performance is commonly ſaid to ſmell of the lamp, my commendation of a noble thought, a ſprightly ſally, or a bold figure, is to pronounce it freſh from the garret; an expreſſion which would break from me upon the peruſal of moſt of your papers, did I not believe, that you ſometimes quit the garret, and aſcend into the cock-loft.

HYPERTATUS.

NUMB.

NUMB. 118. SATURDAY, *May* 4, 1751.

——— *Omnes illacrymabiles*
Urgentur, ignotique longâ
Nocte.——— HOR.

CICERO has, with his uſual elegance and magnificence of language, attempted, in his relation of the dream of *Scipio*, to depreciate thoſe honours for which he himſelf appears to have panted with reſtleſs and importunate ſolicitude, by ſhewing within what narrow limits all that fame and celebrity which man can hope from men is circumſcribed.

"YOU ſee," ſays *Africanus*, pointing at the earth from the celeſtial regions, "that "the globe aſſigned to the reſidence and ha-"bitation of human beings is of ſmall dimen-"ſions: how then can you obtain from the "praiſe of men, any glory worthy of a wiſh? "Of this little world the inhabited parts are "neither numerous nor wide; even the ſpots "where men are found are broken by inter-"vening deſarts; and the nations are ſo ſepa-

"rated

"rated as that nothing can be tranſmitted "from one to another. With the people of "the ſouth, by whom the oppoſite part of "the earth is poſſeſſed, you have no inter- "courſe; and by how ſmall a tract do you "communicate with the countries of the "north? The territory which you inhabit is "no more than a ſcanty iſland, incloſed by a "ſmall body of water, to which you give the "name of the great ſea, and the *Atlantick* "ocean. And even in this known and fre- "quented continent, what hope can you en- "tertain, that your renown will paſs the "ſtream of *Ganges*, or the cliffs of *Caucaſus*? "or by whom will your name be uttered in "the extremities of the north or ſouth, to- "wards the riſing or the ſetting ſun? So nar- "row is the ſpace to which your fame can "be propagated, and even there how long "will it remain?"

He then proceeds to aſſign natural cauſes why fame is not only narrow in its extent, but ſhort in its duration; he obſerves the difference between the computation of time in earth and heaven, and declares, that accord-

ing

ing to the celeſtial chronology, no human honours can laſt a ſingle year.

SUCH are the objections by which *Tully* has made a ſhew of diſcouraging the purſuit of fame; objections which ſufficiently diſcover his tenderneſs and regard for his darling phantom. *Homer*, when the plan of his poem made the death of *Patroclus* neceſſary, reſolved, at leaſt, that he ſhould die with honour; and, therefore, brought down againſt him the patron god of *Troy*, and left to *Hector* only the mean taſk of giving the laſt blow to an enemy whom a divine hand had diſabled from reſiſtance. Thus *Tully* ennobles fame, which he profeſſes to degrade by oppoſing it to celeſtial happineſs; he confines not its extent but by the boundaries of nature, nor contracts its duration but by repreſenting it ſmall in the eſtimation of ſuperior beings. He ſtill admits it the higheſt and nobleſt of terreſtrial objects, and alleges little more againſt it, than that it is neither without end, nor without limits.

WHAT might be the effect of theſe obſervations conveyed in *Ciceronian* eloquence to *Roman* underſtandings, cannot be determined; but

but few of those who shall in the present age read my humble version will find themselves much depressed in their hopes, or retarded in their designs; for I am not inclined to believe, that they who among us pass their lives in the cultivating of knowledge, or the acquisition of power, have very anxiously enquired what opinions prevail on the farther banks of the *Ganges*, or have invigorated any effort by the desire of spreading their renown among the clans of *Caucasus*. The hopes and fears of modern minds are content to range in a narrower compass; a single nation, and a few years, have generally sufficient amplitude to fill our imagination.

A LITTLE consideration will indeed teach us, that fame has other limits than mountains and oceans; and that he who places happiness in the frequent repetition of his name, may spend his life in propagating it, without any danger of weeping for new worlds, or necessity of passing the *Atlantick* sea.

THE numbers to whom any real and perceptible good or evil can be derived by the greatest power, or most active diligence, are incon-

inconſiderable; and where neither benefit nor miſchief operate, the only motive to the mention or remembrance of others is curioſity; a paſſion, which, though in ſome degree univerſally aſſociated with reaſon, is eaſily confined, overborn, or diverted from any particular object.

AMONG the lower claſſes of mankind, there will be found very little deſire of any other knowledge, than what may contribute immediately to the relief of ſome preſſing uneaſineſs, or the attainment of ſome near advantage. The *Turks* are ſaid to hear with wonder a propoſal to walk out, only that they may walk back; and enquire, why any man ſhould labour for nothing: ſo thoſe whoſe condition has always reſtrained them to the contemplation of their own neceſſities, and who have been accuſtomed to look forward only to a ſmall diſtance, will ſcarcely underſtand, why nights and days ſhould be ſpent in ſtudies, which end in new ſtudies, and which, according to *Malherbe*'s obſervation, do not tend to leſſen the price of bread; nor will the trader or manufacturer eaſily be perſuaded, that much pleaſure can ariſe from the mere know-

ledge

ledge of actions, performed in remote regions, or in distant times; or that any thing can deserve their enquiry, of which κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν, οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν, we can only hear the report, but which cannot influence our lives by any consequences.

The truth is, that very few have leisure from indispensable business, to employ their thoughts upon narrative or characters; and among those to whom fortune has given the liberty of living more by their own choice, many create to themselves engagements, by the indulgence of some petty ambition, the admission of some insatiable desire, or the toleration of some predominant passion. The man whose whole wish is to accumulate money, has no other care than to collect interest, to estimate securities, and to enquire for mortgages: the lover disdains to turn his ear to any other name than that of *Corinna*; and the courtier thinks the hour lost, which is not spent in promoting his interest, and facilitating his advancement. The adventures of valour, and the discoveries of science, will find a cold reception, when they are obtruded upon an attention, thus busy

buſy with its favourite amuſement, and impatent of interruption or diſturbance.

But not only ſuch employments as ſeduce attention by the appearance of dignity, or the promiſe of happineſs, may reſtrain the mind from excurſion and enquiry; curioſity may be equally deſtroyed by leſs formidable enemies; it may be diſſipated in triſles, or congealed by indolence. The ſportſmen and the men of dreſs have their heads filled with a fox or a horſe-race, a feather or a ball; and live in ignorance of every thing beſide, with as much content as he that heaps up gold, or ſolicits preferment, digs the field, or beats the anvil; and ſome dream out their days without pleaſure or buſineſs, without joy or ſorrow, nor ever rouſe from their lethargy to hear or think.

Even of thoſe who have dedicated themſelves to knowledge, the far greater part have confined their curioſity to a few objects, and have very little inclination to promote any fame, but that of which their own ſtudies entitle them to partake. The naturaliſt has no deſire to know the opinions or conjectures

of

of the philologer: the botanist looks upon the astronomer, as a being unworthy of his regard: the lawyer scarcely hears the name of a physician without contempt; and he that is growing great and happy by electrifying a bottle, wonders how the world can be engaged by trifling prattle about war or peace.

If, therefore, he that imagines the world filled with his actions and praises, shall subduct from the number of his encomiasts, all those who are placed below the flight of fame, and who hear in the vallies of life no other voice than that of necessity; all those who imagine themselves too important to regard him, and consider the mention of his name, as an usurpation of their time; all who are too much, or too little, pleased with themselves, to attend to any thing external; all who are attracted by pleasure, or chained down by pain, to unvaried ideas; all who are with-held from attending his triumph by different pursuits; and all who slumber in universal negligence; he will find his renown streightened by nearer bounds than the rocks of *Caucasus*, and perceive that no man can be venerable or formidable,

amiable, but to a small part of his fellow-creatures.

THAT we may not languish in our endeavours after excellence, it is necessary, that, as *Africanus* counsels his descendant, "we raise "our eyes to higher prospects, and contemplate our future and eternal state, without "giving up our hearts to the praise of crouds, "or fixing our hopes on such rewards as human power can bestow."

NUMB. 119. TUESDAY, *May* 7, 1751.

Iliacos intra muros peccatur, et extra.

HOR.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

AS, notwithstanding all that wit, or malice, or pride, or prudence, will be able to suggest, men and women must at last pass their lives together, I have never been able to think

think thoſe writers friends to human happineſs, who endeavour to excite in either ſex a general contempt or ſuſpicion of the other. To perſuade them who are entering the world, and looking abroad for a ſuitable aſſociate, that all are equally vicious, or equally ridiculous; that they who truſt are certainly betrayed, and they who eſteem are always diſappointed; is not to awaken judgment, but to inflame temerity. Without hope there can be no caution. Thoſe who are convinced, that no reaſon for preference can be found, will never haraſs their thoughts with doubt and deliberation; they will reſolve, ſince they are doomed to miſery, that no needleſs anxiety ſhall diſturb their quiet; they will plunge at hazard into the croud, and ſnatch the firſt hand that ſhall be held toward them.

That the world is over-run with vice, cannot be denied; but vice, however predominant, has not yet gained an unlimited dominion. Simple and unmingled good is not in our power, but we may generally eſcape a greater evil by ſuffering a leſs; and therefore, thoſe who undertake to initiate the young and ignorant in the knowledge of life, ſhould be

be careful to inculcate the poſſibility of virtue and happineſs, and to encourage endeavours by proſpects of ſucceſs.

You perhaps do not ſuſpect, that theſe are the ſentiments of one who has been ſubject for many years to all the hardſhips of antiquated virginity; has been long accuſtomed to the coldneſs of neglect, and the petulance of inſult; has been mortified in full aſſemblies by enquiries after forgotten faſhions, games long diſuſed, and wits and beauties of ancient renown; has been invited, with malicious importunity, to the ſecond wedding of many acquaintances; has been ridiculed by two generations of coquets in whiſpers intended to be heard; and been long conſidered by the airy and gay, as too venerable for familiarity, and too wiſe for pleaſure. It is indeed natural for injury to provoke anger, and by continual repetition to produce an habitual aſperity; yet I have hitherto ſtruggled with ſo much vigilance againſt my pride, and my reſentment, that I have preſerved my temper uncorrupted. I have not yet made it any part of my employment to collect ſentences againſt marriage; nor am inclined to leſſen the number of the

few

few friends whom time has left me, by obſtructing that happineſs which I cannot partake, and venting my vexation in cenſures of the forwardneſs and indiſcretion of girls, or the inconſtancy, unfeelingneſs, and perfidy of men.

It is, indeed, not very difficult to bear that condition to which we are not condemned by neceſſity, but induced by obſervation and choice; and therefore I, perhaps, have never yet felt all the malignity with which a reproach edged with the appellation of old maid ſwells ſome of thoſe hearts in which it is infixed. I was not condemned in my youth to ſolitude, either by indigence or deformity, nor paſſed the earlier part of life without the flattery of courtſhip, and the joys of triumph. I have danced the round of gaiety amidſt the murmurs of envy, and gratulations of applauſe; been attended from pleaſure to pleaſure by the great, the ſprightly, and the vain; and ſeen my regard ſolicited by the obſequiouſneſs of gallantry, the gaiety of wit, and the timidity of love. If, therefore, I am yet a ſtranger to nuptial happineſs, I ſuffer only the conſequences of my own reſolves, and can look

look back upon the ſucceſſion of lovers whoſe addreſſes I have rejected, without grief and without malice.

When my name firſt began to be inſcribed upon glaſſes, I was honoured with the amorous profeſſions of the gay *Venuſtulus*, a gentleman, who, being the only ſon of a wealthy family, had been educated in all the wantonneſs of expence, and ſoftneſs of effeminacy. He was beautiful in his perſon, and eaſy in his addreſs, and, therefore, ſoon gained upon my eye at an age when the ſight is very little over-ruled by the underſtanding. He had not any power in himſelf of gladdening or amuſing; but ſupplied his want of converſation by treats and diverſions; and his chief art of courtſhip was to fill the mind of his miſtreſs with parties, rambles, muſick, and ſhews. We were often engaged in ſhort excurſions to gardens and ſeats, and I was for a while pleaſed with the care which *Venuſtulus* diſcovered in ſecuring me from any appearance of danger or poſſibility of miſchance. He never failed to recommend caution to his coachman, or to promiſe the waterman a reward if he landed us ſafe; and always contrived to return by day-

light for fear of robbers. This extraordinary ſolicitude was repreſented for a time as the effect of his tenderneſs for me, but fear is too ſtrong for continued hypocriſy. I ſoon diſcovered, that *Veruſtulus* had the cowardice as well as elegance of a female. His imagination was perpetually clouded with terrors, and he could ſcarcely refrain from ſcreams and outcries at any accidental ſurprize. He durſt not enter a room if a rat was heard behind the wainſcoat, nor croſs a field where the cattle were friſking in the ſunſhine; the leaſt breeze that waved upon the river was a ſtorm, and every clamour in the ſtreet was a cry of fire. I have ſeen him loſe his colour when my ſquirrel had broke his chain; and was forced to throw water in his face on the ſudden entrance of a black cat. Compaſſion once obliged me to drive away with my fan, a beetle that kept him in diſtreſs, and chide off a dog that yelped at his heels, to which he would gladly have given up me to facilitate his own eſcape. Women naturally expect defence and protection from a lover or a huſband, and therefore you will not think me culpable in refuſing a wretch, who would have burdened life with unneceſſary fears,

and

and ſhown to me for that ſuccour which it was his duty to have given.

My next lover was *Fungoſo*, the ſon of a ſtockjobber, whoſe viſits my friends, by the importunity of perſuaſion, prevailed upon me to allow. *Fungoſo* was no very ſuitable companion; for, having been bred in a counting-houſe, he ſpoke a language unintelligible in any other place. He had no deſire of any reputation, but that of an acute prognoſticator of the changes in the funds; nor had any means of raiſing merriment, but by telling how ſomebody was over-reached in a bargain by his father. He was, however, a youth of great ſobriety and prudence, and frequently informed us how carefully he would improve my fortune. I was not in haſte to conclude the match, but was ſo much awed by my parents, that I durſt not diſmiſs him, and might, perhaps, have been doomed for ever to the groſneſs of pedlary, and the jargon of uſury, had not a fraud been diſcovered in the ſettlement, which ſet me free from the perſecution of groveling pride, and pecuniary impudence.

I was afterwards ſix months without any

particular notice, but at laſt became the idol of the glittering *Floſculus*, who preſcribed the mode of embroidery to all the fops of his time, and varied at pleaſure the cock of every hat, and the ſleeve of every coat, that appeared in faſhionable aſſemblies. *Floſculus* made ſome impreſſion upon my heart by a compliment which few ladies can hear without emotion; he commended my ſkill in dreſs, my judgment in ſuiting colours, and my art in diſpoſing ornaments. But *Floſculus* was too much engaged by his own elegance, to be ſufficiently attentive to the duties of a lover, or to pleaſe with varied praiſe an ear made delicate by riot of adulation. He expected to be repaid part of his tribute, and ſtaid away three days, becauſe I neglected to take notice of a new coat. I quickly found, that *Floſculus* was rather a rival than an admirer; and that we ſhould probably live in a perpetual ſtruggle of emulous finery, and ſpend our lives in ſtratagems to be firſt in the faſhion.

I HAD ſoon after the honour at a feaſt of attracting the eyes of *Dentatus*, one of thoſe human beings whoſe only happineſs is to dine. *Dentatus* regaled me with foreign varieties, told

told me of meaſures that he had laid for procuring the beſt cook in *France*, and entertained me with bills of fare, preſcribed the arrangement of diſhes, and taught me two ſawces invented by himſelf. At length, ſuch is the uncertainty of human happineſs, I declared my opinion too haſtily upon a pie made under his own direction; after which he grew ſo cold and negligent, that he was eaſily diſmiſſed.

MANY other lovers, or pretended lovers, I have had the houour to lead a while in triumph. But two of them I drove from me by diſcovering, that they had no taſte or knowledge in muſick; three I diſmiſſed, becauſe they were drunkards; two, becauſe they paid their addreſſes at the ſame time to other ladies; and ſix, becauſe they attempted to influence my choice, by bribing my maid. Two more I diſcarded at the ſecond viſit, for obſcene alluſions; and five for drollery on religion. In the latter part of my reign, I ſentenced two to perpetual exile, for offering me ſettlements, by which the children of a former marriage would have been injured; four, for repreſenting falſly the value of their eſtates;

three, for concealing their debts; and one, for raiſing the rent of a decrepit tenant.

I have now ſent you a narrative, which the ladies may oppoſe to the tale of *Hymenæus*. I mean not to depreciate the ſex, which has produced poets and philoſophers, heroes and martyrs; but will not ſuffer the riſing generation of beauties to be dejected by partial ſatire; or to imagine, that thoſe who cenſure them, have not likewiſe their follies, and their vices. I do not yet believe happineſs unattainable in marriage though I have never yet been able to find a man, with whom I could prudently venture an inſeparable union. It is neceſſary to expoſe faults, that their deformity may be ſeen; but the reproach ought not to be extended beyond the crime, nor either ſex to be condemned, becauſe ſome women, or men, are indelicate, or diſhoneſt.

I am, &c.

TRANQUILLA.

NUMB.

NUMB. 120. SATURDAY, *May* 11, 1751.

Redditum Cyri ſolio Phraaten,
Diſſidens plebi, numero beatorum
Eximit virtus: populumque falſis
Dedocet uti
Vocibus. HOR.

IN the reign of *Jenghiz Can*, conqueror of the eaſt, in the city of *Samarcand*, lived *Nouradin* the merchant, renowned throughout all the regions of *India* for the extent of his commerce, and the integrity of his dealings. His warehouſes were filled with all the commodities of the remoteſt nations; every rarity of nature, every curioſity of art, whatever was valuable, whatever was uſeful, haſted to his hand. The ſtreets were crouded with his carriages; the ſea was covered with his ſhips; the ſtreams of *Oxus* were wearied with conveyance, and every breeze of the ſky wafted wealth to *Nouradin*.

At length *Nouradin* felt himſelf ſeized with a ſlow malady, which he firſt endeavoured to divert by application, and afterwards to relieve by luxury and indulgence; but finding his ſtrength every day leſs, he was at laſt terrified, and called for help upon the ſages of phyſick; they filled his apartments with alexipharmicks, reſtoratives, and eſſential virtues; the pearls of the ocean were diſſolved, the ſpices of *Arabia* were diſtilled, and all the powers of nature were employed, to give new ſpirits to his nerves, and new balſam to his blood. *Nouradin* was for ſome time amuſed with promiſes, invigorated with cordials, or ſoothed with anodynes; but the diſeaſe preyed upon his vitals, and he ſoon diſcovered with indignation, that health was not to be bought. He was confined to his chamber, deſerted by his phyſicians, and rarely viſited by his friends; but his unwillingneſs to die flattered him long with hopes of life.

At length, having paſſed the night in tedious languor, he called to him *Almamoulin*, his only ſon; and, diſmiſſing his attendants, "My ſon," ſays he, "behold here the "weak-

" weakneſs and fragility of man; look back-
" ward a few days, thy father was great and
" happy, freſh as the vernal roſe, and ſtrong
" as the cedar of the mountain; the nations
" of *Aſia* drank his dews, and art and com-
" merce delighted in his ſhade. Malevolence
" beheld me, and ſighed: His root, ſhe cried,
" is fixed in the depths; it is watered by the
" fountains of *Oxus*; it ſends out branches
" afar, and bids defiance to the blaſt; pru-
" dence reclines againſt his trunk, and pro-
" ſperity dances on his top. Now, *Almamou-*
" *lin*, look upon me withering and proſtrate;
" look upon me, and attend. I have traffick-
" ed, I have proſpered, I have rioted in gain;
" my houſe is ſplendid, my ſervants are nu-
" merous; yet I diſplayed only a ſmall part
" of my riches; the reſt, which I was hin-
" dered from enjoying by the fear of raiſing
" envy, or tempting rapacity, I have piled in
" towers, I have buried in caverns, I have
" hidden in ſecret repoſitories, which this
" ſcroll will diſcover. My purpoſe was, af-
" ter ten months more ſpent in commerce,
" to have withdrawn my wealth to a ſafer
" country; to have given ſeven years to de-
" light and feſtivity, and the remaining part

"of my days to ſolitude and repentance; but "the hand of death is upon me; a frigori-"fick torpor encroaches upon my veins; I am "now leaving the produce of my toil, which "it muſt be thy buſineſs to enjoy with wiſ-"dom." The thought of leaving his wealth filled *Nouradin* with ſuch grief, that he fell into convulſions, became delirious, and expired.

ALMAMOULIN, who loved his father, was touched a while with honeſt ſorrow, and ſat two hours in profound meditation, without peruſing the paper which he held in his hand. He then retired to his own chamber, as overborn with affliction, and there read the inventory of his new poſſeſſions, which ſwelled his heart with ſuch tranſports, that he no longer lamented his father's death. He was now ſufficiently compoſed to order a funeral of modeſt magnificence, ſuitable at once to the rank of *Nouradin*'s profeſſion, and the reputation of his wealth. The two next nights he ſpent in viſiting the tower and the caverns, and found the treaſures greater to his eye than to his imagination.

ALMAMOU-

ALMAMOULIN had been bred to the practice of exact frugality, and had often looked with envy on the finery and expences of other young men: he therefore believed, that happineſs was now in his power, ſince he could obtain all of which he had hitherto been accuſtomed to regret the want. He reſolved to give a looſe to his deſires, to revel in enjoyment, and feel pain or uneaſineſs no more.

HE immediately procured a ſplendid equipage, dreſſed his ſervants in rich embroidery, and covered his horſes with golden capariſons. He ſhowered down ſilver on the populace, and ſuffered their acclamations to ſwell him with inſolence. The nobles ſaw him with anger, the wiſe men of the ſtate combined againſt him, the leaders of armies threatened his deſtruction. *Almamoulin* was informed of his danger: he put on the robe of mourning in the preſence of his enemies, and appeaſed them with gold, and gems, and ſupplication.

HE then ſought to ſtrengthen himſelf, by an alliance with the princes of *Tartary*, and offered the price of kingdoms, for a wife of

noble birth. His ſuit was generally rejected, and his preſents refuſed; but a princeſs of *Aſtracan* once condeſcended to admit him to her preſence. She received him ſitting on a throne, attired in the robe of royalty, and ſhining with the jewels of *Golconda*; command ſparkled in her eyes, and dignity towered on her forehead. *Almamoulin* approached and trembled. She ſaw his confuſion, and diſdained him: How, ſays ſhe, dares the wretch hope my obedience, who thus ſhrinks at my glance? Retire, and enjoy thy riches in ſordid oſtentation; thou waſt born to be wealthy, but never canſt be great.

He then contracted his deſires to more private and domeſtick pleaſures. He built palaces, he laid out gardens, he changed the face of the land, he tranſplanted foreſts, he levelled mountains, opened proſpects into diſtant regions, poured fountains from the tops of turrets, and rolled rivers through new chanels.

These amuſements pleaſed him for a time; but languor and wearineſs ſoon invaded him. His bowers loſt their fragrance, and the waters murmured without notice. He purchaſed large

large tracts of land in distant provinces, adorned them with houses of pleasure, and diversified them with accommodations for different seasons. Change of place at first relieved his satiety, but all the novelties of situation were soon exhausted; he found his heart vacant, and his desires, for want of external objects, ravaging himself.

He therefore returned to *Samarcand*, and set open his doors to those whom idleness sends out in search of pleasure. His tables were always covered with delicacies; wines of every vintage sparkled in his bowls, and his lamps scattered perfumes. The sound of the lute, and the voice of the singer, chased away sadness; every hour was crouded with pleasure; and the day ended and began with feasts and dances, and revelry and merriment. *Almamoulin* cried out, "I have at last found "the use of riches; I am surrounded by com-"panions, who view my greatness without "envy; and I enjoy at once the raptures of "popularity, and the safety of an obscure "station. What trouble can he feel, whom "all are studious to please, that they may be

"repaid

"repaid with pleaſure? What danger can he "dread, to whom every man is a friend?"

SUCH were the thoughts of *Almamoulin*, as he looked down from a gallery upon the gay aſſembly, regaling at his expence; but in the midſt of this ſoliloquy, an officer of juſtice entered the houſe, and, in the form of legal citation, ſummoned *Almamoulin* to appear before the emperor. The gueſts ſtood a while aghaſt, then ſtole imperceptible away, and he was led off without a ſingle voice to witneſs his integrity. He now found one of his moſt frequent viſitants, accuſing him of treaſon in hopes of ſharing his confiſcation; yet, unpatronized and unſupported, he cleared himſelf by the openneſs of innocence, and the conſiſtence of truth; he was diſmiſſed with honour, and his accuſer periſhed in priſon.

ALMAMOULIN now perceived with how little reaſon he had hoped for juſtice or fidelity from thoſe who live only to gratify their ſenſes; and, being now weary with vain experiments upon life and fruitleſs ſearches after felicity, he had recourſe to a ſage, who, after ſpending his youth in travel and obſervation,

tion, had retired from all human cares, to a ſmall habitation on the banks of *Oxus*, where he converſed only with ſuch as ſolicited his counſel. "Brother," ſaid the philoſopher, "thou haſt ſuffered thy reaſon to be "deluded by idle hopes, and fallacious ap- "pearances. Having long looked with deſire "upon riches, thou hadſt taught thyſelf to "think them more valuable than nature de- "ſigned them, and to expect from them, "what experience has now taught thee, that "they cannot give. That they do not con- "fer wiſdom, thou mayſt be convinced, by "conſidering at how dear a price they tempt- "ed thee, upon thy firſt entrance into the "world, to purchaſe the empty ſound of vul- "gar acclamation. That they cannot be- "ſtow fortitude or magnanimity, that man "may be certain, who ſtood trembling at "*Aſtracan*, before a being not naturally ſu- "perior to himſelf. That they will not ſup- "ply unexhauſted pleaſure, the recollection "of forſaken palaces, and neglected gardens, "will eaſily inform thee. That they rarely "purchaſe friends, thou didſt ſoon diſcover, "when thou wert left to ſtand thy tryal un- "countenanced and alone. Yet think not

"riches

" riches uſeleſs; there are purpoſes, to which " a wiſe man may be delighted to apply them; " they may, by a rational diſtribution to " thoſe who want them, eaſe the pains of " helpleſs diſeaſe, ſtill the throbs of reſtleſs " anxiety, relieve innocence from oppreſſion, " and raiſe imbecillity to chearfulneſs and vi- " gour. This they will enable thee to per- " form, and this will afford the only happi- " neſs ordained for our preſent ſtate, the " confidence of divine favour, and the hope " of future rewards."

NUMB. 121. TUESDAY, *May* 14, 1751.

O imitatores, ſervum pecus!

HOR.

I Have been informed by a letter, from one of the univerſities, that among the youth from whom the next ſwarm of reaſoners is to learn philoſophy, and the next flight of beauties to hear elegies and ſonnets, there are many, who, inſtead of endeavouring by books and meditation to form their own opinions, content themſelves with the ſecondary knowledge, which a convenient bench in a coffee-houſe can ſupply; and, without any examination or diſtinction, adopt the criticiſms and remarks, which happen to drop from thoſe, who have riſen, by merit or fortune, to reputation and authority.

THESE humble retailers of knowledge my correſpondent ſtigmatizes with the name of *Echoes*; and ſeems deſirous, that they ſhould be

be made aſhamed of lazy ſubmiſſion, and animated to attempts after new diſcoveries, and original ſentiments.

It is very natural for young men to be vehement, acrimonious, and ſevere. For, as they ſeldom comprehend at once all the conſequences of a poſition, or perceive the difficulties by which cooler and more experienced reaſoners are reſtrained from confidence, they form their concluſions with great precipitance; as they ſee nothing that can darken or embarraſs the queſtion, they expect to find their own opinion univerſally prevalent, and are inclined to impute uncertainty and heſitation to want of honeſty, rather than of knowledge. I may, perhaps, therefore be reproached by my lively correſpondent, when it ſhall be found, that I have no inclination to perſecute theſe collectors of fortuitous knowledge with the ſeverity required; yet, as I am now too old to be much terrified or pained by haſty cenſure, I ſhall not be afraid of taking into protection thoſe whom I think condemned without a ſufficient knowledge of their cauſe.

He

He that adopts the ſentiments of another, whom he has reaſon to believe wiſer than himſelf, is only to be blamed, when he claims the honours which are not due but to the author, and endeavours to deceive the world into praiſe and veneration. For, to learn, is the proper buſineſs of youth; and whether we encreaſe our knowledge by books, or by converſation, we are equally indebted to foreign aſſiſtance.

The greater part of ſtudents are not born with abilities, to conſtruct ſyſtems, or advance knowledge; nor can have any hope beyond that of becoming intelligent hearers in the ſchools of art, of being able to comprehend what others diſcover, and to remember what others teach. Even thoſe to whom Providence has allotted greater ſtrength of underſtanding, can expect only to improve a ſingle ſcience. In every other part of learning, they muſt be content to follow opinions, which they are not able to examine; and, even in that which they claim as peculiarly their own, can ſeldom add more than ſome ſmall particle of knowledge, to the hereditary

ſtock

ſtock devolved to them from ancient times, the collective labour of a thouſand intellects.

In ſcience, which being fixed and limited, admits of no other variety than ſuch as ariſes from new methods of diſtribution, or new arts of illuſtration, the neceſſity of following the traces of our predeceſſors is indiſputably evident; but there appears no reaſon, why imagination ſhould be ſubject to the ſame reſtraint. It might be conceived, that of thoſe who profeſs to forſake the narrow paths of truth every one may deviate towards a different point, ſince though rectitude is uniform and fixed, obliquity may be infinitely diverſified. The fields of ſcience are narrow, ſo that they who travel them, muſt either follow or meet one another; but in the boundleſs regions of poſſibility, which fiction claims for her dominion, there are ſurely a thouſand receſſes unexplored, a thouſand flowers unplucked, a thouſand fountains unexhauſted, combinations of imagery yet unobſerved, and races of ideal inhabitants not hitherto deſcribed.

Yet,

YET, whatever hope may perſuade, or reaſon evince, experience can boaſt of very few additions to ancient fable. The wars of *Troy*, and the travels of *Ulyſſes*, have furniſhed almoſt all ſucceeding poets with incidents, characters, and ſentiments. The *Romans* are confeſſed to have attempted little more than to diſplay in their own tongue the inventions of the *Greeks*. There is, in all their writings, ſuch a perpetual recurrence of alluſions to the tales of the fabulous age, that they muſt be confeſſed often to want that power of giving pleaſure which novelty ſupplies; nor can we wonder, that they excelled ſo much in the graces of diction, when we conſider how rarely they were employed in ſearch of new thoughts.

THE warmeſt admirers of the great *Mantuan* poet can extol him for little more than the ſkill with which he has, by making his hero both a traveller and a warrior, united the beauties of the *Iliad* and *Odyſſey* in one compoſition: yet his judgment was perhaps ſometimes overborn by his avarice of the *Homeric* treaſures; and, for fear of ſuffering a ſparkling orna-

ornament to be loſt, he has inſerted it where it cannot ſhine with its original ſplendor.

When *Ulyſſes* viſited the infernal regions, he found, that among the heroes that periſhed at *Troy*, his competitor *Ajax*, who, when the arms of *Achilles* were adjudged to *Ulyſſes*, died by his own hand in the madneſs of diſappointment. He ſtill appeared to reſent, as on earth, his loſs and diſgrace. *Ulyſſes* endeavoured to pacify him with praiſes and ſubmiſſion; but *Ajax* walked away without reply. This paſſage has always been conſidered as eminently beautiful; becauſe *Ajax* the haughty chief, the unlettered ſoldier, of unſhaken courage, of immoveable conſtancy, but without the power of recommending his own virtues by eloquence, or enforcing his aſſertions by any other argument than the ſword, had no way of making his anger known, but by gloomy ſullenneſs, and dumb ferocity. His hatred of a man whom he conceived to have defeated him only by volubility of tongue, was therefore naturally ſhewn by ſilence more contemptuous and piercing than any words that ſo rude an orator could have found, and by which he

he give his enemy no opportunity of exerting the only power in which he was superior.

When *Æneas* is ſent by *Virgil* to viſit the ſhades, he meets with *Dido* the queen of *Carthage* whom his perfidy had hurried to the grave; he accoſts her with tenderneſs and excuſes; but the lady turns away like *Ajax* in mute diſdain. She turns away like *Ajax*, but ſhe reſembles him in none of thoſe qualities, which give either dignity or propriety to ſilence. She might, without any departure from the tenour of her conduct, have burſt out like other injured women into clamour, reproach, and denunciation; but *Virgil* had his imagination full of *Ajax*, and therefore could not prevail on himſelf to teach *Dido* any other mode of reſentment.

If *Virgil* could be thus ſeduced by imitation, there will be little hope, that common wits ſhould eſcape; and accordingly we find, that beſides the univerſal and acknowledged practice of copying the ancients, there has prevailed in every age a particular ſpecies of fiction. At one time all truth was conveyed in allegory; at another, nothing was ſeen but

in

in a vision; at one period, all the poets followed sheep, and every event produced a pastoral; at another they busied themselves wholly in giving directions to a painter.

It is indeed easy to conceive why any fashion should become popular, by which idleness is favoured, and imbecillity assisted; but surely no man of genius can much applaud himself for repeating a tale with which the audience is already tired, and which could bring no honour to any but its inventor.

There are, I think, two schemes of writing, on which the laborious wits of the present time employ their faculties. One is the adaptation of sense to all the rhymes which our language can supply to some word, that makes the burden of the stanza; but this, as it has been only used in a kind of amorous burlesque, can scarcely be censured with much acrimony. The other is the imitation of *Spenser*, which, by the influence of some men of learning and genius, seems likely to gain upon the age, and therefore deserves to be more attentively considered.

To imitate the fictions and ſentiments of *Spenſer* can incur no reproach, for allegory is perhaps one of the moſt pleaſing vehicles of inſtruction. But I am very far from extending the ſame reſpect to his diction or his ſtanza. His ſtile was in his own time allowed to be vicious, ſo darkened with old words and peculiarities of phraſe, and ſo remote from common uſe, that *Johnſon* boldly pronounces him to have written no language. His ſtanza is at once difficult and unpleaſing; tireſome to the ear by its uniformity, and to the attention by its length. It was at firſt formed in imitation of the *Italian* poets, without due regard to the genius of our language. The *Italians* have ſo little variety of termination, that they were forced to contrive ſuch a ſtanza as might admit the greateſt number of ſimilar rhymes; but our words end with ſo much diverſity, that it is ſeldom convenient for us to bring more than two of the ſame ſound together. If it be juſtly obſerved by *Milton*, that rhyme obliges poets to expreſs their thoughts in improper terms, theſe improprieties muſt always be multiplied, as the

difficulty of rhyme is encreaſed by long concatenations.

THE imitators of *Spenſer* are indeed not very rigid cenſors of themſelves, for they ſeem to conclude, that when they have diſfigured their lines with a few obſolete ſyllables, they have accompliſhed their deſign, without conſidering that they ought not only to admit words, but to avoid new. The laws of imitation are broken by every word introduced ſince the time of *Spenſer*, as the character of *Hector* is violated by quoting *Ariſtotle* in the play. It would indeed be difficult to exclude from a long poem all modern phraſes, though it is eaſy to ſprinkle it with gleanings of antiquity. Perhaps, however, the ſtile of *Spenſer* might by long labour be juſtly copied; but life is ſurely given us for higher purpoſes than to gather what our anceſtors have wiſely thrown away, and to learn what is of no value, but becauſe it has been forgotten.

NUMB.

NUMB. 122. SATURDAY, *May* 18, 1751.

Nescio quæ natale solum dulcedine cunctos
Ducit. OVID.

NOTHING is more subject to miſtake and diſappointment than anticipated judgment concerning the eaſineſs or difficulty of any undertaking, whether we form our opinion from the performances of others, or from abſtracted contemplation of the thing to be attempted.

WHATEVER is done ſkilfully appears to be done with eaſe; and art, when it is once matured to habit, vaniſhes from obſervation. We are therefore more powerfully excited to emulation, by thoſe who have attained the higheſt degree of excellence, and whom we can therefore with leaſt reaſon hope to equal.

IN adjuſting the probability of ſucceſs by a previous conſideration of the undertaking, we

are equally in danger of deceiving ourſelves. It is never eaſy, nor often poſſible, to compriſe the ſeries of any proceſs, with all its circumſtances, incidents, and variations, in a ſpeculative ſcheme. Experience ſoon ſhews us the tortuoſities of imaginary rectitude, the complications of ſimplicity, and the aſperities of ſmoothneſs. Sudden difficulties often ſtart up from the ambuſhes of art, ſtop the career of activity, repreſs the gaiety of confidence, and when we imagine ourſelves almoſt at the end of our labours, drive us back to new plans and different meaſures.

THERE are many things which we every day ſee others unable to perform, and perhaps have even ourſelves miſcarried in attempting; and yet can hardly allow to be difficult; nor can we forbear to wonder afreſh at every new failure, or to promiſe certainty of ſucceſs to our next eſſay; but when we try, the ſame hindrances recur, the ſame inability is perceived, and the vexation of diſappointment muſt again be ſuffered.

OF the various kinds of ſpeaking or writing, which ſerve neceſſity, or promote plea-

ſure,

none appears so artless or easy as simple narration; for what should make him that knows the whole order and progress of an affair unable to relate it? Yet we hourly find such as endeavour to entertain or instruct us by recitals, clouding the facts which they intend to illustrate, and losing themselves and their auditors in wilds and mazes, in digression and confusion. When we have congratulated ourselves upon a new opportunity of enquiry, and new means of information; it often happens, that without designing either deceit or concealment, without ignorance of the fact, or unwillingness to disclose it, the relator fills the ear with empty sounds, harasses the attention with fruitless impatience, and disturbs the imagination by a tumult of events, without order of time, or train of consequence.

It is natural to believe upon the same principle, that no writer has a more easy task than the historian. The philosopher has the works of omniscience to examine; and is therefore engaged in disquisitions, to which finite intellects are utterly unequal. The poet trusts to his invention, and is not only in

danger of thoſe inconſiſtencies, to which every one is expoſed by departure from truth; but may be cenſured as well for deficiencies of matter, as for irregularity of diſpoſition, or impropriety of ornament. But the happy hiſtorian has no other labour than of gathering what tradition pours down before him, or records treaſure for his uſe. He has only the actions and deſigns of men like himſelf to conceive and to relate; he is not to form, but copy characters, and therefore is not blamed for the inconſiſtency of ſtateſmen, the injuſtice of tyrants, or the cowardice of commanders. The difficulty of making variety conſiſtent, or uniting probability with ſurprize, needs not to diſturb him; the manners and actions of his perſonages are already fixed; his materials are provided and put into his hands, and he is at leiſure to employ all his powers in arranging and diſplaying them.

Yet, even with theſe advantages, very few in any age have been able to raiſe themſelves to reputation by writing hiſtories; and among the innumerable authors, who fill every nation with accounts of their anceſtors, or undertake to tranſmit to futurity the events of their

their own time, the greater part, when fashion and novelty have ceased to recommend them, are of no other use than chronological memorials, which necessity may sometimes require to be consulted, but which fright away curiosity, and disgust delicacy.

It has been observed, that our nation, which has produced so many authors eminent for almost every other species of literary excellence, has been hitherto remarkably barren of historical genius; and so far has this defect raised prejudices against us, that some have doubted, whether an *Englishman* can stop at that mediocrity of stile, or confine his mind to that even tenour of imagination, which narrative requires.

They who can believe that nature has so capriciously distributed understanding, have surely no claim to the honour of serious confutation. The inhabitants of the same country have opposite characters in different ages; the prevalence or neglect of any particular study can proceed only from the accidental influence of some temporary cause; and if we have failed in history, we can have failed only because

hiſtory has not hitherto been diligently cultivated.

But how is it evident, that we have not hiſtorians among us, whom we may venture to place in compariſon with any that the neighbouring nations can produce? The attempt of *Raleigh* is deſervedly celebrated for the labour of his reſearches, and the elegance of his ſtile; but he has endeavoured to exert his judgment more than his genius, to ſelect facts, rather than adorn them; and has produced an hiſtorical diſſertation, but ſeldom riſen to the majeſty of hiſtory.

The work of *Clarendon* deſerves more regard. His diction is indeed neither exact in itſelf, nor ſuited to the purpoſe of hiſtory. It is the effuſion of a mind crouded with ideas, and deſirous of imparting them; and therefore always accumulating words, and involving one clauſe and ſentence in another. But there is dignity in his negligence, a rude inartificial majeſty, which, without the nicety of laboured elegance, ſwells the mind by its plenitude and diffuſion. His narration is not perhaps ſufficiently rapid, being ſtopped

too

too frequently by particularities, which, though they might strike the author who was present at the transactions, will not equally detain the attention of posterity. But his ignorance or carelessness of the art of writing are amply compensated by his knowledge of nature and of policy; the wisdom of his maxims, the justness of his reasonings, and the variety, distinctness, and strength of his characters.

But none of our writers can, in my opinion, justly contest the superiority of *Knolles*, who, in his history of the *Turks*, has displayed all the excellencies that narration can admit. His style, though somewhat obscured by time, and sometimes vitiated by false wit, is pure, nervous, elevated, and clear. A wonderful multiplicity of events is so artfully arranged, and so distinctly explained, that each facilitates the knowledge of the next. Whenever a new personage is introduced, the reader is prepared by his character for his actions; when a nation is first attacked, or city besieged, he is made acquainted with its history, or situation; so that a great part of the world is brought under his view. The descriptions of this author are without minuteness, and the digres-

ſions without oſtentation. Collateral events are ſo artfully woven into the contexture of his principal ſtory, that they cannot be diſjoined, without leaving it lacerated and broken. There is nothing turgid in his dignity, nor ſuperfluous in his copiouſneſs. His orations only, which he feigns, like the ancient hiſtorians, to have been pronounced on remarkable occaſions, are tedious and languid; and ſince they are merely the voluntary ſports of imagination, prove how much the moſt judicious and ſkilful may be miſtaken, in the eſtimate of their own powers.

NOTHING could have ſunk this author in obſcurity, but the remoteneſs and barbarity of the people, whoſe ſtory he relates. It ſeldom happens, that all circumſtances concur to happineſs or fame. The nation, which produced this great hiſtorian, has the grief of ſeeing his genius employed upon a foreign and unintereſting ſubject; and that writer, who might have ſecured perpetuity to his name, by a hiſtory of his own country, has expoſed himſelf to the danger of oblivion, by recounting enterprizes and revolutions, of which none deſire to be informed.

NUMB.

NUMB. 123. TUESDAY, *May* 27, 1752.

Quo ſemel eſt imbuta recens, ſervabit odorem
Teſta diu. HOR.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

THOUGH I have ſo long found myſelf deluded by projects of honour and diſtinction, that I often reſolve to admit them no more into my heart; yet how determinately ſoever excluded, they always recover their dominion by force or ſtratagem; and whenever, after the ſhorteſt relaxation of vigilance, reaſon and caution return to their charge, they find hope again in poſſeſſion, with all her train of pleaſures dancing about her.

EVEN while I am preparing to write a hiſtory of diſappointed expectations; I cannot forbear to flatter myſelf, that you and your

readers are impatient for my performance; and that the ſons of learning have laid down ſeveral of your late papers with diſcontent, when they found that *Miſcapelus* had delayed to continue his narrative.

But the deſire of gratifying the expectations that I have raiſed, is not the only motive of this relation, which, having once promiſed it, I think myſelf no longer at liberty to forbear. For however I may have wiſhed to clear myſelf from every other adheſion of trade, I hope I ſhall be always wiſe enough to retain my punctuality, and amidſt all my new arts of politeneſs, continue to deſpiſe negligence, and deteſt falſhood.

When the death of my brother had diſmiſſed me from the duties of a ſhop, I conſidered myſelf as reſtored to the rights of my birth, and entitled to the rank and reception, which my anceſtors obtained. I was, however, embarraſſed with many difficulties at my firſt re-entrance into the world; for my haſte to be a gentleman inclined me to precipitate meaſures; and every accident that forced me back towards my old ſtation, was conſidered

confidered by me, as an obſtruction of my happineſs.

It was no common grief and indignation, that I found my former companions ſtill daring to claim my notice, and the journeymen and apprentices ſometimes pulling me by the ſleeve as I was walking the ſtreet; and without any terror of my new ſword, which was, notwithſtanding, of an uncommon ſize, inviting me to partake of a bottle at the old houſe, and entertaining me with hiſtories of the girls in the neighbourhood. I had always, in my officinal ſtate, been kept in awe by lace and embroidery; and imagined that to fright away theſe unwelcome familiarities, nothing was neceſſary, but that I ſhould, by ſplendor of dreſs, proclaim my re-union with a higher rank. I therefore ſent for my taylor; ordered a ſuit with twice the uſual quantity of lace; and, that I might not let my perſecutors encreaſe their confidence, by the habit of accoſting me, ſtaid at home till it was made.

This week of confinement I paſſed in practiſing a forbidding frown, a ſmile of condeſcenſion, a ſlight ſalutation, and an abrupt departure;

departure; and in four mornings was able to turn upon my heel, with ſo much levity and ſprightlineſs, that I made no doubt of diſcouraging all publick attempts upon my dignity. I therefore iſſued forth in my new coat, with a reſolution of dazzling intimacy to a fitter diſtance; and pleaſed myſelf with the timidity and reverence, which I ſhould impreſs upon all who had hitherto preſumed to haraſs me with their freedoms. But, whatever was the cauſe, I did not find myſelf received with any new degree of reſpect; thoſe whom I intended to drive from me, ventured to advance with their uſual phraſes of benevolence; and thoſe whoſe acquaintance I ſolicited, grew more ſupercilious and reſerved. I began ſoon to repent the expence, by which I had procured no advantage, and to ſuſpect, that a ſhining dreſs, like a weighty weapon, has no force in itſelf, but owes all its efficacy to him that wears it.

MANY were the mortifications and calamities, which I was condemned to ſuffer in my initiation to politeneſs. I was ſo much tortured by the inceſſant civilities of my companions, that I never paſſed through that region

gion of the city but in a chair with the curtains drawn; and at laſt left my lodgings, and found myſelf in the verge of the court. Here I endeavoured to be thought a gentleman juſt returned from his travels, and was pleaſed to have my landlord believe, that I was in ſome danger from importunate creditors; but this ſcheme was quickly defeated by a formal deputation ſent to offer me, though I had now retired from buſineſs, the freedom of my company.

I WAS now detected in trade, and therefore reſolved to ſtay no longer. I hired another apartment, and changed my ſervants. Here I lived very happily for three months, and, with ſecret ſatisfaction, often overheard the family celebrating the greatneſs and felicity of the eſquire; though the converſation ſeldom ended without ſome complaint of my covetouſneſs, or ſome remark upon my language, or my gait. I now began to venture into the publick walks, and to know the faces of nobles and beauties; but could not obſerve, without wonder, as I paſſed by them, how frequently they were talking of a taylor. I longed, however, to be admitted to converſation, and

was somewhat weary of walking in crowds without a companion, yet continued to come and go with the rest, till a lady whom I endeavoured to protect in a crowded passage, as she was about to step into her chariot, thanked me for my civility, and told me, that, as she had often distinguished me for my modest and respectful behaviour, whenever I set up for myself, I might expect to see her among my first customers.

Here was an end of all my ambulatory projects. I indeed sometimes entered the walks again, but was always blasted by this destructive lady, whose mischievous generosity recommended me to her acquaintance. Being therefore forced to practise my adscititious character upon another stage, I betook myself to a coffee-house frequented by wits, among whom I learned in a short time the cant of criticism, and talked so loudly and volubly of nature, and manners, and sentiment, and diction, and similies, and contrasts, and action, and pronunciation, that I was often desired to lead the hiss and clap, and was feared and hated by the players and the poets. Many a sentence have I hissed, which I did

not

not underſtand, and many a groan have I uttered, when the ladies were weeping in the boxes. At laſt a malignant author, whoſe performance I had perſecuted through the nine nights, wrote an epigram upon *Tope* the critick, which drove me from the pit for ever.

My deſire to be a fine gentleman ſtill continued: I therefore, after a ſhort ſuſpenſe, choſe a new ſet of friends at the gaming table, and was for ſome time pleaſed with the civility and openneſs with which I found myſelf treated. I was indeed obliged to play, but, being naturally timorous and vigilant, was never ſurpriſed into large ſums. What might have been the conſequence of long familiarity with theſe plunderers, I had not an opportunity of knowing; for one night the conſtables entered and ſeized us, and I was once more compelled to ſink into my former condition, by ſending for my old maſter to atteſt my character.

When I was deliberating to what new qualifications I ſhould aſpire, I was ſummoned into

into the country, by an account of my father's death. Here I had hopes of being able to diſtinguiſh myſelf, and to ſupport the honour of my family. I therefore bought guns and horſes, and, contrary to the expectation of the tenants, encreaſed the ſalary of the huntſman. But when I entered the field, it was ſoon diſcovered, that I was not deſtined to the glories of the chace. I was afraid of thorns in the thicket, and of dirt in the marſh; I ſhivered on the brink of a river while the ſportſmen croſſed it, and trembled at the ſight of a five-bar gate. When the ſport and danger were over, I was ſtill equally diſconcerted; for I was effeminate, though not delicate, and could only join a feebly whiſpering voice in the clamours of their triumph.

A FALL, by which my ribs were broken, ſoon recalled me to domeſtick pleaſures, and I exerted all my art to obtain the favour of the neighbouring ladies; but where-ever I came, there was always ſome unlucky converſation upon ribbands, fillets, pins, or thread, which drove all my ſtock of compliments out of my memory, and overwhelmed me with ſhame and dejection.

THUS

Thus I paſſed the ten firſt years after the death of my brother, in which I have learned at laſt to repreſs that ambition, which I could never gratify; and, inſtead of waſting more of my life in vain endeavours after accompliſhments, which, if not early acquired, no endeavours can obtain, I ſhall confine my care to thoſe higher excellencies which are in every man's power; and though I cannot enchant affection by elegance and eaſe, hope to ſecure eſteem by honeſty and truth.

I am, &c.

Misocapelus.

NUMB. 124. SATURDAY, *May* 25, 1751.

——Tacitum ſylvas inter reptare ſalubres
Curantem quicquid dignum ſapiente bonoque eſt.
HOR.

THE ſeaſon of the year is now come in which the theatres are ſhut, and the card-tables forſaken; the regions of luxury are for a while unpeopled, and pleaſure leads out her votaries to groves and gardens, to ſtill ſcenes and erratick gratifications. Thoſe who have paſſed many months in a continual tumult of diverſion; who have never opened their eyes in the morning, but upon ſome new appointment; nor ſlept at night without a dream of dances, muſick, and good hands, or of ſoft ſighs, languiſhing looks, and humble ſupplications; muſt now retire to diſtant provinces, where the ſirens of flattery are ſcarcely to be heard, where beauty ſparkles without praiſe or envy, and wit is repeated only by the echo.

As I think it one of the most important duties of ſocial benevolence to give warning of the approach of calamity when by timely prevention it may be turned aſide, or by preparatory meaſures be more eaſily endured, I cannot feel the encreaſing warmth, or obſerve the lengthening days, without conſidering the condition of my fair readers, who are now preparing to leave all that has ſo long filled up their hours, all from which they have been accuſtomed to hope for delight; and who, till faſhion proclaims the liberty of returning to the ſeats of mirth and elegance, muſt endure the rugged 'ſquire, the ſober houſewife, the loud huntſman, or the formal parſon, the roar of obſtreperous jollity, or the dulneſs of prudential inſtruction; without any retreat, but to the gloom of ſolitude, where they will yet find greater inconveniencies, and muſt learn, however unwillingly, to endure themſelves.

In winter, the life of the polite and gay, may be ſaid to roll on with a ſtrong and rapid current; they float along from pleaſure to pleaſure, without the trouble of regulating

their

their own motions, and purſue the courſe of the ſtream in all the felicity of inattention; content that they find themſelves in progreſſion, and careleſs whither they are going. But the months of ſummer are a kind of ſleeping ſtagnation without wind or tide, where they are left to force themſelves forward by their own labour, and to direct their paſſage by their own ſkill; and where, if they have not ſome internal principle of activity, they muſt be ſtranded upon ſhallows, or lie torpid in a perpetual calm.

THERE are, indeed, ſome to whom this univerſal diſſolution of gay ſocieties affords a welcome opportunity of quitting without diſgrace, the poſt which they have found themſelves unable to maintain; and of ſeeming to retreat only at the call of nature, from aſſemblies where, after a ſhort triumph of unconteſted ſuperiority, they are overpowered by ſome new intruder of ſofter elegance or ſprightlier vivacity. By theſe, hopeleſs of victory, and yet aſhamed to confeſs a conqueſt, the ſummer is regarded as a releaſe from the fatiguing ſervice of celebrity, a diſmiſſion to more certain joys and a ſafer empire. They now

solace themselves with the influence which they shall obtain, where they have no rival to fear; and with the lustre which they shall diffuse, when nothing can be seen of brighter splendour. They image, while they are preparing for their journey, the admiration with which the rusticks will crowd about them; plan the laws of a new assembly; or contrive to delude provincial ignorance with a fictitious mode. A thousand pleasing expectations swarm in the fancy; and all the approaching weeks are filled with distinctions, honours, and authority.

But others, who have lately entered the world, or have yet had no proofs of its inconstancy and desertion, are cut off by this cruel interruption from the enjoyment of their prerogatives, and doomed to lose four months in unactive obscurity. Many complaints do vexation and desire extort from these exiled tyrants of the town, against the inexorable sun, who pursues his course without any regard to love or beauty; and visits either tropick at the stated time, whether shunned or courted, deprecated or implored.

To them who leave the places of public resort in the full bloom of reputation, and withdraw from admiration, courtship, fame, and applause, a rural triumph can give nothing equivalent. The praise of gardens, and the felicities of weakness, are little regarded by beauties who have been accustomed to more important conquests, and more valuable panegyricks. Nor indeed should the powers which have made havoch in the theatres, or borne down rivalry in courts, be degraded to a mean attack upon the untravelled heir, or ignoble conteſt with the ruddy milk-maid.

How then muſt four long months be worn away! Four months, in which there will be no routes, no ſhews, no ridottos; in which viſits muſt be regulated by the weather, and aſſemblies will depend upon the moon! The Platoniſts imagine, that the future puniſhment of thoſe who have in this life debaſed their reaſon by ſubjection to their ſenſes, and have preferred the groſs gratifications of lewdneſs and luxury, to the pure and ſublime felicity of virtue and contemplation, will ariſe from

the

the predominance and ſolicitations of the ſame appetites, in a ſtate which can furniſh no means of appeaſing them. I cannot but ſuppoſe that this month, bright with ſunſhine, and fragrant with perfumes; this month, which covers the meadow with verdure, and decks the gardens with all the mixtures of colorifick radiance; this month, from which the man of fancy expects new infuſions of imagery, and the naturaliſt new ſcenes of obſervation; this month will chain down multitudes to the *Platonick* penance of deſire without enjoyment, and hurry them from the higheſt ſatisfactions, which they have yet learned to conceive, into a ſtate of hopeleſs wiſhes and pining recollection, where the eye of vanity will look round for admiration to no purpoſe, and the hand of avarice ſhuffle cards in a bower with ineffectual dexterity.

From the tedioufneſs of this melancholy ſuſpenſion of life, I would willingly preſerve thoſe who are expoſed to it, only by inexperience; who want not inclination to wiſdom or virtue, though they have been diſſipated by negligence, or miſled by example; and who would gladly find the way to rational

happineſs, though it ſhould be neceſſary to ſtruggle with habit, and abandon faſhion. To theſe many arts of ſpending time might be recommended, which would neither ſadden the preſent hour with wearineſs, nor the future with repentance.

It would ſeem impoſſible to a ſolitary ſpeculatiſt, that a human being can want employment. To be born in ignorance with a capacity of knowledge, and to be placed in the midſt of a world filled with variety, perpetually preſſing upon the ſenſes and irritating curioſity, is ſurely a ſufficient ſecurity againſt the languiſhment of inattention. Novelty is indeed neceſſary to preſerve eagerneſs and alacrity; but art and nature have ſtores inexhauſtible by human intellects; and every moment produces ſomething new to him, who has quickened his faculties by diligent obſervation.

Some ſtudies, for which the country and the ſummer afford peculiar opportunities, I ſhall perhaps endeavour to recommend in a future eſſay; but if there be any apprehenſion not apt to admit unaccuſtomed ideas,

time, or any attention ſo ſtubborn and inflexible, as not eaſily to comply with new directions, even theſe obſtructions cannot exclude the pleaſure of application; for there is a higher and nobler employment, to which all faculties are adapted by him who gave them. The duties of religion, ſincerely and regularly performed, will always be ſufficient to exalt the meaneſt, and to exerciſe the higheſt underſtanding. That mind will never be vacant, which is frequently recalled by ſtated duties to meditations on eternal intereſts; nor can any hour be long, which is ſpent in obtaining ſome new qualification for celeſtial happineſs.

NUMB. 125. TUESDAY, *May* 28, 1751.

Deſcriptas ſervare vices, operumque colores,
Cur ego, ſi nequeo ignoroque, poeta ſalutor?
HOR.

IT is one of the maxims of the civil law, that *definitions are hazardous*. Things modified by human underſtandings, ſubject to varieties of complication, and changeable as experience advances knowledge, or accident influences caprice, are ſcarcely to be included in any ſtanding form of expreſſion, becauſe they are always ſuffering ſome alteration of their ſtate. Definition is, indeed, not the province of man; every thing is ſet above or below our faculties. The works and operations of nature are too great in their extent or too much diffuſed in their relations, and the performances of art too inconſtant and uncertain, to be reduced to any determinate idea. It is impoſſible to impreſs upon our minds an adequate and juſt repreſenta-

tion

tion of an object so great that we can never take it into our view, or so mutable that it is always changing under our eye, and has already lost its form while we are labouring to conceive it.

DEFINITIONS have been no less difficult or uncertain in criticism than in law. Imagination, a licentious and vagrant faculty, unsusceptible of limitations, and impatient of restraint, has always endeavoured to baffle the logician, to perplex the confines of distinction, and burst the inclosures of regularity. There is therefore scarcely any species of writing, of which we can tell what is its essence, and what are its constituents; every new genius produces some innovation, which, when invented and approved, subverts the rules which the practice of foregoing authors had established.

COMEDY has been particularly unpropitious to definers; for though perhaps they might properly have contented themselves, with declaring it to be *such a dramatic representation of human life, as may excite mirth*, they have embarrassed their definition with

the means by which the comic writers attain their end, without conſidering that the various methods of exhilarating their audience, not being limited by nature, cannot be compriſed in precept. Thus, ſome make comedy a repreſentation of mean, and others of bad men; ſome think that its eſſence conſiſts in the unimportance, others in the fictitiouſneſs, of the tranſaction. But any man's reflections will inform him, that every dramatic compoſition which raiſes mirth is comic; and that, to raiſe mirth, it is by no means univerſally neceſſary, that the perſonages ſhould be either mean or corrupt, nor always requiſite, that the action ſhould be trivial, nor ever, that it ſhould be fictitious.

If the two kinds of dramatick poetry had been defined only by their effects upon the mind, ſome abſurdities might have been prevented, with which the compoſitions of our greateſt poets are diſgraced, who, for want of ſome ſettled ideas and accurate diſtinctions, have unhappily confounded tragic with comic ſentiments. They ſeem to have thought, that as the meanneſs of perſonages conſtituted comedy, their greatneſs was ſuf-

ficient

ſubject to form a tragedy; and that nothing was neceſſary to dignity and ſeriouſneſs, but that they ſhould croud the ſcene with monarchs, and generals, and guards; and make them talk, at certain intervals, of the downfal of kingdoms, and the rout of armies. They have not conſidered, that thoughts or incidents in themſelves ridiculous, grow ſtill more groteſque by the ſolemnity of ſuch characters; that reaſon and nature are uniform and inflexible; and that what is deſpicable and abſurd, will not, by any aſſociation with ſplendid titles, become rational or great; that the moſt important affairs, by an intermixture of an unſeaſonable levity, may be made contemptible; and that the robes of royalty can give no protection to nonſenſe or to folly.

"COMEDY," ſays *Horace*, "ſometimes "raiſes her voice;" and tragedy may likewiſe on proper occaſions abate her dignity; but as the comic perſonages can only depart from their familiarity of ſtile, when the more violent paſſions are put in motion, the heroes and queens of tragedy ſhould never deſcend to trifle, but in the hours of eaſe, and intermiſſions

missions of danger. Yet in the tragedy of Don *Sebastian*, when the king of *Portugal* is in the hands of his enemy, and having just drawn the lot, by which he is condemned to die, breaks out into a wild boast that his dust shall take possession of *Africk*, the dialogue proceeds thus between the captive and his conqueror:

Muley Moluch. What shall I do to conquer thee?
Seb. Impossible!
Souls know no conquerors.
M. Mol. I'll shew thee for a monster thro' my *Africk*.
Seb. No, thou canst only shew me for a man:
Afric is stor'd with monsters; man's a prodigy
Thy subjects have not seen.
M. Mol. Thou talk'st as if
Still at the head of battle.
Seb. Thou mistak'st,
For there I would not talk.
Benducar, the Minister. Sure he would sleep.

THIS conversation, with the sly remark of the minister, can only be found not to be comick,

mick, becauſe it wants the probability neceſſary to repreſentations of common life, and degenerates too much towards buffoonry and farce.

THE ſame play affords a ſmart return of the general to the emperor, who, enforcing his orders for the death of *Sebaſtian*, vents his impatience in this abrupt threat:

——— No more replies,
But ſee thou do'ſt it: Or ———

To which *Dorax* anſwers,

Choak in that threat: I can ſay Or as loud.

A THOUSAND inſtances of ſuch impropriety might be produced, were not one ſcene in *Aureng-Zebe* ſufficient to exemplify it. *Indamora*, a captive queen, having *Aureng-Zebe* for her lover, employs *Arimant*, to whoſe charge ſhe had been intruſted, and whom ſhe had made ſenſible of her charms, to carry a meſſage to his rival.

ARIMANT, *with a letter in his hand:* INDAMORA.

Arim. And I the meſſenger to him from you?
Your empire you to tyranny purſue:
You lay commands, both cruel and unjuſt,
To ſerve my rival, and betray my truſt.

Ind. You firſt betray'd your truſt in loving me:
And ſhould not I my own advantage ſee?
Serving my love, you may my friendſhip gain:
You know the reſt of your pretences vain.
You muſt, my *Arimant*, you muſt be kind:
'Tis in your nature, and your noble mind.

Arim. I'll to the king, and ſtrait my truſt reſign.

Ind. His truſt you may, but you ſhall never mine.
Heav'n made you love me for no other end,
But to become my confident and friend:
As ſuch, I keep no ſecret from your ſight,
And therefore make you judge how ill I write:
Read it, and tell me freely then your mind,
If 'tis indited, as I meant it, kind.

Arim. *I aſk not heav'n my freedom to reſtore,*
[Reading.
But only for your ſake —— I'll read no more.
And

And yet I muſt ——
Leſs for my own, than for your ſorrow ſad —
[Reading.
Another line, like this, would make me mad—
Heav'n! ſhe goes on—yet more—and yet more kind! [*As Reading.*
Each ſentence is a dagger to my mind.
See me this night —— [Reading.
Thank fortune, who did ſuch a friend provide;
For faithful Arimant *ſhall be your guide.*
Not only to be made an inſtrument,
But pre-engag'd without my own conſent!
Ind. Unknown t'engage you, ſtill augments my ſcore,
And gives you ſcope of meriting the more.
Arim. The beſt of men
Some int'reſt in their actions muſt confeſs;
None merit, but in hope they may poſſeſs.
The fatal paper rather let me tear,
Than, like *Bellerophon*, my own ſentence bear.
Ind. You may; but 'twill not be your beſt advice:
'Twill only give me pains of writing twice.
You know you muſt obey me, ſoon or late:
Why ſhould you vainly ſtruggle with your fate?

Arim. I thank thee, heav'n! thou hast
been wond'rous kind!
Why am I thus to slavery design'd,
And yet am cheated with a freeborn mind?
Or make thy orders with my reason suit,
Or let me live by sense, a glorious brute——
[*She frowns.*
You frown, and I obey with speed, before
That dreadful sentence comes, *See me no more.*

In this scene, every circumstance concurs to turn tragedy to farce. The wild absurdity of the expedient; the contemptible subjection of the lover; the folly of obliging him to read the letter only because it ought to have been concealed from him; the frequent interruptions of amorous impatience; the faint expostulations of a voluntary slave; the imperious haughtiness of a tyrant without power; the deep reflection of the yielding rebel upon fate and free-will; and his wise wish to lose his reason as soon as he finds himself about to do what he cannot persuade his reason to approve, are surely sufficient to awaken the most torpid risibility.

There is scarce a tragedy of the last century

mary which has not debased its most important incidents, and polluted its most serious interlocutions with buffoonry and meanness; but though perhaps it cannot be pretended that the present age has added much to the force and efficacy of the drama, it has at least been able to escape many faults, which either ignorance had overlooked, or indulgence had licensed. The later tragedies indeed have faults of another kind, perhaps more destructive to delight, though less open to censure. That perpetual tumor of phrase with which every thought is now expressed by every personage, the paucity of adventures which regularity admits, and the unvaried equality of flowing dialogue, has taken away from our present writers almost all that dominion over the passions which was the boast of their predecessors. Yet they may at least claim this commendation, that they avoid gross faults, and that if they cannot often move terror or pity, they are always careful not to provoke laughter.

NUMB. 126. SATURDAY, *June* 1, 1751.

— Nihil eſt aliud magnum quam multa minuta.
VET. AUCT.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

AMONG other topicks of converſation which your papers ſupply, I was lately engaged in a diſcuſſion of the character given by *Tranquilla* of her lover *Venuſtulus*, whom, notwithſtanding the ſeverity of his miſtreſs, the greater number ſeemed inclined to acquit of unmanly or culpable timidity.

ONE of the company remarked, that prudence ought to be diſtinguiſhed from fear; and that if *Venuſtulus* was afraid of nocturnal adventures, no man who conſidered how much every avenue of the town was infeſted with robbers could think him blameable; for why ſhould life be hazarded without proſpect of honour

honour or advantage? Another was of opinion, that a brave man might be afraid of croſſing the river in the cabouſſ window; and declared, that, for his part, while there were coaches and a bridge, he would never be ſeen tottering in a wooden caſe, out of which he might be thrown by any irregular agitation, or which might be overſet by accident, or negligence, or by the force of a ſudden guſt, or the ruſh of a larger veſſel. It was his cuſtom, he ſaid, to keep the ſecurity of day-light, and dry ground; for it was a maxim with him, that no wiſe man ever periſhed by water, or was loſt in the dark.

THE next was humbly of opinion, that if *Tranquilla* had ſeen, like him, the cattle run roaring about the meadows in the hot months, ſhe would not have thought meanly of her lover for not venturing his ſafety among them. His neighbour then told us, that for his part he was not aſhamed to confeſs, that he could not ſee a rat, though it was dead, without palpitation; that he had been driven ſix times out of his lodging either by rats or mice; and that he always had a bed in the cloſet for his ſervants, whom he called up whenever the enemy

enemy was in motion. Another wondered that any man ſhould think himſelf diſgraced by a precipitate retreat from a dog; for there was always a poſſibility that a dog might be mad; and that ſurely, though there was no danger but of being bit by a fierce animal, there was more wiſdom in flight than conteſt. By all theſe declarations another was encouraged to confeſs, that if he had been admitted to the honour of paying his addreſſes to *Tranquilla*, he ſhould have been likely to incur the ſame cenſure; for among all the animals upon which nature has impreſſed deformity and horror, there was none whom he durſt not encounter rather than a beetle.

THUS, Sir, tho' cowardice is univerſally defined too cloſe and anxious an attention to perſonal ſafety, there will be found ſcarcely any fear, however exceſſive in its Degree, or unreaſonable in its object, which will be allowed to characterize a coward. Fear is a paſſion which every man feels ſo frequently predominant in his own breaſt, that he is unwilling to hear it cenſured with great aſperity; and, perhaps, if we confeſs the truth, the ſame reſtraint which would hinder a man from declaiming

againſt

againſt the frauds of any employment among thoſe who profeſs it, ſhould with-hold him from treating fear with contempt among human beings.

YET ſince fortitude is one of thoſe virtues which the condition of our nature makes hourly neceſſary, I think you cannot better direct your admonitions than againſt ſuperfluous and panick terrors. Fear is indeed implanted in us as a preſervative from evil; but its duty, like that of other paſſions, is not to overbear reaſon, but to aſſiſt it; nor ſhould it be ſuffered to tyrannize in the imagination, to blind the diſcernment, or obſtruct activity, to raiſe phantoms of horror, or beſet life with ſupernumerary diſtreſſes.

To be always afraid of loſing life, is, indeed, ſcarcely to enjoy a life that can deſerve the care of preſervation. He that once indulges idle fears will never be at reſt. Our preſent ſtate admits only of a kind of negative ſecurity; we muſt conclude ourſelves ſafe when we ſee no danger, or none inadequate to our powers of oppoſition. Death indeed continually hovers about us, but hovers commonly

monly unſeen, unleſs we ſharpen our ſight by uſeleſs curioſity.

THERE is always a point at which caution, however ſolicitous, muſt limit its preſervatives, becauſe one terror often counteracts another. I once knew one of the ſpeculatiſts of cowardice whoſe reigning diſturbance was the dread of houſe-breakers. His enquiries were for nine years employed upon the beſt method of barring a window, or a door; and many an hour has he ſpent in eſtabliſhing the preference of a bolt to a lock. He had at laſt, by the daily ſuperaddition of new expedients, contrived a door which could never be forced; for one bar was ſecured by another with ſuch intricacy of ſubordination, that he was himſelf not always able to diſengage them in the proper method. He was happy in this fortification, till being aſked how he would eſcape if he was threatened by fire, he diſcovered, that with all his care, and all his expence, he had only been aſſiſting his own deſtruction. He then immediately tore off his bolts, and now leaves at night his outer door half locked, that he may not by his own folly periſh in the flames.

THERE

THERE is one ſpecies of terror which thoſe who are unwilling to ſuffer the reproach of cowardice have wiſely dignified with the name of *antipathy*. A man who talks with intrepidity of the monſters of the wilderneſs while they are out of ſight, will readily confeſs his *antipathy* to a mole, a weaſel, or a frog. He has indeed no dread of harm from an inſect or a worm, but his *antipathy* turns him pale whenever they approach him. He believes that a boat will tranſport him with as much ſafety as his neighbours, but he cannot conquer his *antipathy* to the water. Thus he goes on without any reproach from his own reflections, and every day multiplies *antipathies*, till he becomes contemptible to others and burdenſome to himſelf.

IT is indeed certain, that impreſſions of dread may ſometimes be unluckily made by objects not in themſelves juſtly formidable; but when fear is diſcovered to be groundleſs, it is to be eradicated like other falſe opinions, and *antipathies* are generally ſuperable by a ſingle effort. He that has been taught to ſhudder at a mouſe, if he can perſuade himſelf

ſelf to riſque one encounter, will find his own ſuperiority, and exchange his terrors for the pride of conqueſt.

I am, Sir, &c.

THRASO.

SIR,

AS you profeſs to extend your regard to the minuteneſs of decency and accommodation, as well as to the dignity of ſcience, and importance of ſeverer duties, I cannot forbear to lay before you a mode of perſecution by which I have been exiled to taverns and coffee-houſes, and deterred from entering the doors of my friends.

AMONG the ladies who pleaſe themſelves with ſplendid furniture, or elegant entertainment, it is a practice, if not univerſal, yet very common, to aſk every gueſt how he likes the carved work of the cornice, or the figures of the tapeſtry; the china at the table, or the plate on the ſide-board; and on all occaſions to enquire his opinion of their judgment and their choice. *Melania* has laid her new watch

in

in the window nineteen times, that she may desire me to look upon it. *Calliste* has an art of dropping her snuff-box by drawing out her handkerchief, that when I pick it up, I may admire it; and *Fulgentia* has conducted me, by mistake, into the wrong room, at every visit I have paid since her picture was put into a new frame.

I HOPE, Mr. RAMBLER, you will inform them, that no man should be denied the privilege of silence, or tortured to false declarations; and that though ladies may justly claim to be exempt from rudeness, they have no right to force unwilling civilities. To please is a laudable and elegant ambition, and is properly rewarded with honest praise; but to seize applause by violence, and call out for commendation, without knowing, or caring to know, whether it be given from conviction, is a species of tyranny by which modesty is oppressed, and sincerity corrupted. The tribute of admiration thus exacted by impudence and importunity, differs from the respect paid to silent merit, as the plunder of a pirate from the merchant's profit.

I am, Sir, &c. MISOCOLAX.

SIR,

SIR,

YOUR great predeceſſor, the Spectator, endeavoured to diffuſe among his female readers a deſire of knowledge; nor can I charge you, though you do not ſeem equally attentive to the ladies, with endeavouring to diſcourage them from any laudable purſuit. But however either he or you may excite our curioſity, you have not yet informed us how it may be gratified. The world ſeems to have formed an univerſal conſpiracy againſt our underſtandings; our queſtions are ſuppoſed not to expect anſwers, our arguments are confuted with a jeſt, and we are treated like beings who tranſgreſs the limits of our nature whenever we aſpire to ſerioufneſs or improvement.

I ENQUIRED yeſterday of a gentleman eminent for aſtronomical ſkill, what made the day long in ſummer, and ſhort in winter; and was told that nature protracted the days in ſummer, leſt ladies ſhould want time to walk in the park; and the nights in winter, leſt they ſhould not have hours ſufficient to ſpend at the card-table.

I HOPE

I HOPE you do not doubt but I heard ſuch information with juſt contempt, and I deſire you to diſcover to this great maſter of ridicule, that I was very far from wanting any intelligence which he could have given me. I aſked the queſtion with no other intention than to ſet him free from the neceſſity of ſilence and gave him an opportunity of mingling on equal terms with a polite aſſembly from which, however uneaſy, he could not then eſcape, by a kind introduction of the only ſubject on which I believed him able to ſpeak with propriety.

I am, &c.

GENEROSA.

NUMB. 127. TUESDAY, *June* 4, 1751.

Cæpisti melius quàm desinis: ultima primis
Cedunt: dissimiles hic vir, et ille puer.

OVID.

POLITIAN, a name eminent among the restorers of polite literature, when he published a collection of epigrams, prefixed to many of them the year of his age at which they were composed. He might design by this information, either to boast the early maturity of his genius, or to conciliate indulgence to the puerility of his performances. But whatever was his intent, it is remarked by *Scaliger*, that he very little promoted his own reputation, because he fell below the promise which his first productions had given, and in the latter part of life seldom equalled the sallies of his youth.

IT is not uncommon for those who at their first entrance into the world were distinguished for eminent attainments or superior abilities, to disappoint the hopes which they had raised,

[illegible] add to end in neglect and obſcurity [illegible] which they began in celebrity and [illegible]. To the long catalogue of the inconveniencies of old age, which moral and ſatirical writers have ſo copiouſly diſplayed, may be often added the loſs of fame.

THE advance of the human mind towards any object of laudable purſuit, may be compared to the progreſs of a body driven by a blow. It moves for a time with great velocity and vigour, but the force of the firſt impulſe is perpetually decreaſing, and though it ſhould encounter no obſtacle capable of quelling it by a ſudden ſtop, the reſiſtance of the medium through which it paſſes, and the latent inequalities of the ſmoothest ſurface will in a ſhort time by continued retardation wholly overpower it. Some hindrances will be found in every road of life, but he that fixes his eyes upon any thing at a diſtance neceſſarily loſes ſight of all that fills up the intermediate ſpace, and therefore ſets forward with alacrity and confidence, nor ſuſpects a thouſand obſtacles by which he afterwards finds his paſſage embarraſſed and obſtructed. Some are indeed ſtopt at once in their career by a ſud-

den shock of calamity, or diverted to a different direction by the cross impulse of some violent passion; but far the greater part languish by slow degrees, deviate at first into slight obliquities, and themselves scarcely perceive at what time their ardour forsook them, or when they lost sight of their original design.

WEARINESS and negligence are perpetually prevailing by silent encroachments, assisted by different causes, and not observed till they cannot, without great difficulty, be opposed. Labour necessarily requires pauses of ease and relaxation, and the deliciousness of ease commonly makes us unwilling to return to labour. We, perhaps, prevail upon ourselves to renew our attempts, but eagerly listen to every argument for frequent interpositions of amusement; for when indolence has once entered upon the mind, it can scarcely be dispossessed but by such efforts as very few are found willing to exert.

IT is the fate of industry to be equally endangered by miscarriage and success, by confidence and despondency. He that engages in a great undertaking with a false opinion of its facility,

facility, or too high conceptions of his own strength, is easily discouraged by the first hindrance of his advances, because he had promised himself an equal and perpetual progression without impediment or disturbance; when unexpected interruptions break in upon him, he is in the state of a man surprised by a tempest whose he purposed only to bask in the calms, or sport in the shallows.

It is not only common to find the difficulty of an enterprize greater, but the profit less, than hope had pictured it. Youth enters the world with very happy prejudices in her own favour. She imagines herself not only certain of accomplishing every adventure, but of obtaining those rewards which the accomplishment may deserve. She is not easily persuaded to believe that the force of merit can be resisted by obstinacy and avarice, or its lustre darkened by envy and malignity. She has not yet learned that the most evident claims to praise or preferment may be rejected by malice against conviction, or by indolence without examination; that they may be sometimes defeated by artifices, and sometimes overborn by clamour; that in the mingled numbers of mankind,

many need no other provocation to enmity than that they find themselves excelled; that others have ceased their curiosity, and consider every man who fills the mouth of report with a new name, as an intruder upon their retreat, and disturber of their repose; that some are engaged in complications of interest which they imagine endangered by every innovation; that many yield themselves up implicitly to every report which hatred disseminates or folly scatters; and that whoever aspires to the notice of the publick, he has in almost every man an enemy and a rival; and must struggle with the opposition of the daring, and elude the stratagems of the timorous, must quicken the frigid and soften the obdurate, must reclaim perverseness and inform stupidity.

It is no wonder that when the prospect of reward has vanished, the zeal of enterprise should cease; for who would persevere to cultivate the soil which he has, after long labour, discovered to be barren? He who had pleased himself with anticipated praises, and expected that he should meet in every place with patronage or friendship, will soon remit his vigour, when he finds that from those who de-

sire

fire to be considered as his admirers nothing can be hoped but cold civility, and that many refuse to own his excellence, lest they should be too justly expected to reward it.

A MAN thus cut off from the prospect of that port to which his address and fortitude had been employed to steer him, often abandons himself to chance and to the wind, and glides careless and idle down the current of life, without resolution to make another effort, till he is swallowed up by the gulph of mortality.

OTHERS are betrayed to the same desertion of themselves by a contrary fallacy. It was said of *Hannibal* that he wanted nothing to the completion of his martial virtues, but that when he had gained a victory he should know how to use it. The folly of desisting too soon from successful labours, and the haste of enjoying advantages before they are secured, is often fatal to men of impetuous desire, and ardent imagination, to men whose consciousness of uncommon powers fills them with presumption, and who, having born opposition down before them, and left emula-

tion panting behind, are easily perſuaded to imagine that they have reached the height of perfection, and that now being no longer in danger from competitors, they may paſs the reſt of their days in the enjoyment of their acquiſitions, in contemplation of their own ſuperiority, and in attention to their own praiſes, and look unconcerned from their eminence upon the toils and contentions of meaner beings.

It is not ſufficiently conſidered in the hour of exultation, that all human excellence is comparative; that no man performs much but in proportion to what others accompliſh, or to the time and opportunities which have been allowed him; and that he who ſtops at any point of excellence is every day ſinking in eſtimation, becauſe his improvement grows continually more incommenſurate to his life. Yet, as no man willingly quits opinions favourable to himſelf, they who have once been juſtly celebrated, imagine that they ſtill have the ſame pretenſions to regard, and ſeldom perceive the diminution of their character, while there is time to recover it. Nothing then remains but murmurs and remorſe; for

if

if the ſpendthrift's poverty be imbittered by the reflection that he once was rich, how muſt the idler's obſcurity be clouded by remembering that he once had luſtre!

THESE errors all ariſe from an original miſtake of the true motives of action. He that never extends his view beyond the praiſes or rewards of men, will be dejected by neglect and envy, or infatuated by honours and applauſe. But the conſideration that life is only depoſited in his hands to be employed in obedience to a Maſter who will regard his endeavours not his ſucceſs, would have preſerved him from trivial elations and diſcouragements, and enabled him to proceed with conſtancy and chearfulneſs, neither enervated by commendation, nor intimidated by cenſure.

NUMB. 128. SATURDAY, *June* 8, 1751.

Αἰὼν δ' ἀσφαλὴς
Οὐκ ἐγένετ, οὔτ' Αἰακίδᾳ παρὰ Πηλεῖ,
Οὔτε πάρ' ἀντιθέῳ
Κάδμῳ· λέγονταί γε μὰν βρότων
Ὄλβον ὑπέρτατον οἳ
Σχεῖν. PIND.

THE writers who have undertaken the task of reconciling mankind to their present state, and of relieving the discontent produced by the various distribution of terrestrial advantages, very frequently remind us that we judge too hastily of good and evil, that we view only the superficies of life, and determine of the whole by a very small part; and that in the condition of men it frequently happens, that grief and fear, anxiety and desire, lie hid under the golden robes of prosperity, and the gloom of calamity is cheared by secret radiations of hope and comfort; as in the works of nature the bog is sometimes covered

covered with flowers, and the mind shrunk in the barren crags.

NONE but those who have learned the art of subjecting their senses as well as their reason to hypothetical systems will be persuaded by the most specious rhetorician that the lots of life are equal; yet it cannot be denied that every one has his peculiar pleasures and vexations, that external accidents operate variously upon different minds, and that no man can exactly judge from his own sensations what another would feel in the same circumstances.

IF the general disposition of things be estimated by the representation which every one makes of his own state, the world must be considered as the abode of sorrow and misery; for how few can forbear to relate their troubles and distresses? If we judge by the account which may be obtained of every man's fortune from others, it may be concluded, that we are all placed in an elysian region, overspread with the luxuriance of plenty, and fanned by the breezes of felicity; since scarcely any complaint is uttered without censure

from those that hear it, and almost all are allowed to have obtained a provision at least adequate to their virtue or their understanding, to possess either more than they deserve, or more than they enjoy.

We are either born with such dissimilitude of temper and inclinations, or receive so many of our ideas and opinions from the state of life in which we are engaged, and the particular objects by which we are surrounded, that the griefs and cares of one part of mankind seem to the other hypocrisy, folly, and affectation. Every class of society has its cant of lamentation, which is understood or regarded by none but themselves; and every part of life has its uneasinesses, which those who do not feel them will not commiserate. An event which spreads terror and distraction over half the commercial world, that assembles the trading companies in councils and committees, and sinks the hearts and shakes the nerves of a thousand stockjobbers, is read by the landlord and the farmer with frigid indifference. An affair of love which fills the young breast with incessant alternations of hope and fear, and steals away the night and day from every other

pleasure

pleasure or employment, is regarded by them whose passions time has extinguished, to a trivial amusement, which can properly raise neither joy, nor sorrow, and which, though it may be suffered to fill the vacuity of an idle moment, should always give way to prudence or interest.

He that never had any other desire than to fill a chest with money, or to add another manour to his estate, who never grieved but at a bad mortgage, or entered a company but to make a bargain, would be astonished to hear of beings known among the polite and gay by the denomination of wits. How would he gape with curiosity, or grin with contempt, at the mention of beings who have no wish but to speak what was never spoke before; who if they happen to inherit wealth, often exhaust their patrimonies in treating those who will hear them talk; and if they are poor, neglect a thousand opportunities of improving their fortunes for the pleasure of making others laugh? How slowly would he believe that there are men who would rather lose a legacy than the reputation of a distich; who think it less disgrace to want money than

repartee; whom the vexation of having been foiled in a conteſt of raillery is ſometimes ſufficient to deprive of ſleep; and who would eſteem it a lighter evil to miſs a profitable bargain by ſome accidental delay, than not to have thought of a ſmart reply till the time of producing it was paſt? How little would he ſuſpect that this child of idleneſs and frolick enters every aſſembly with a beating boſom, like a litigant on the day of deciſion, and revolves the probability of applauſe with all the anxiety of a conſpirator whoſe fate depends upon the next night; that at the hour of retirement he often carries home, amidſt all his airy negligence, a heart lacerated with envy, or depreſſed with diſappointment; and immures himſelf in his cloſet, that he may diſencumber his memory at leiſure, review the progreſs of the day, ſtate with accuracy his loſs or gain of reputation, and examine the cauſes of his failure or ſucceſs?

And yet more remote from common conceptions are the numerous and reſtleſs anxieties, by which female happineſs is particularly diſturbed. A ſolitary philoſopher would imagine ladies born with an exemption from care and

and sorrow, lulled in perpetual security, and feasted with unmingled pleasure; for what can interrupt the content of those, upon whom one age has laboured after another to confer honours, and accumulate immunities; those to whom rudeness is infamy, and insult is cowardice; whose eye commands the brave, and whose smile softens the severe; whom the sailor travels to adorn, the soldier bleeds to defend, and the poet wears out life to celebrate; who claim tribute from every art and science, and for whom all who approach them endeavour to multiply delights, without requiring from them any return but willingness to be pleased?

SURELY, among these favourites of nature, thus unacquainted with toil and danger, felicity must have fixed her residence; they must know only the changes of more vivid or more gentle joys; their life must always move either to the flow or sprightly melody of the lyre of gladness; they can never assemble but to pleasure, or retire but to peace.

SUCH would be the thoughts of every man who should hover at a distance round the world,

world, and know it only by conjecture and speculation. But experience will soon discover how easily those are disgusted who have been made nice by plenty, and tender by indulgence. He will soon see to how many dangers power is exposed which has no other guard than youth and beauty, and how easily that tranquillity is molested which can only be soothed with the songs of flattery. It is impossible to supply wants as fast as an idle imagination may be able to form them, or to remove all inconveniencies by which elegance refined into impatience may be offended. None are so hard to please as those whom satiety of pleasure makes weary of themselves; nor any so readily provoked as those who have been always courted with an emulation of civility.

THERE are indeed some strokes which the envy of fate aims immediately at the fair. The mistress of *Catullus* wept for her sparrow many centuries ago, and lapdogs will be sometimes sick in the present age. The most fashionable brocade is subject to stains; a pinner, the pride of *Brussels*, may be torn by a careless washer; a picture may drop from a watch; or the triumph

umph of a new suit may be interrupted on the first day of its enjoyment, and all distinctions of dress unexpectedly obliterated by a general mourning.

Such is the state of every age, every sex, and every condition; all have their cares, either from nature or from folly: and whoever therefore finds himself inclined to envy another, should remember that he knows not the real condition which he desires to obtain, but is certain that by indulging a vicious passion, he must lessen that happiness which he thinks already too sparingly bestowed.

NUMB. 129. TUESDAY, *June* 11, 1751.

—Nunc, o nunc, Dædale, dixit,
Materiam, qua sis ingeniosus, habes.
Possidet en terras, et possidet æquora Minos:
Nec tellus nostræ, nec patet unda fugæ.
Restat iter cœlo: cœlo tentabimus ire.
Da veniam cœpto, Jupiter alte, meo.

OVID.

THE greater part of moralists, like other writers, instead of casting their eyes abroad into the living world, and endeavouring to form from their own observations new maxims of practice and new hints of theory, content their curiosity with that secondery knowledge which the perusal of books affords, and think themselves entitled to reverence and to fame by a new arrangement of an ancient system, or new illustration of established principles. The sage precepts of the first instructors of the world are transmitted from age to age with little variation, and echoed from one author

author to another, not perhaps without ſome loſs of their original force at every repercuſſion.

I KNOW not whether any other reaſon than this idleneſs of imitation can be aſſigned for that uniform and conſtant partiality, by which ſome vices have hitherto eſcaped cenſure, and ſome virtues wanted recommendation; not can I diſcover why elſe we have been warned only againſt part of our enemies, while the reſt have been ſuffered to ſteal upon us without notice; or why on one ſide the heart has been doubly fortified, while it has lain open on the other to the incurſions of error, and the ravages of vice.

AMONG the favourite topicks of moral declamation, may be numbered the dangers and miſcarriages of imprudent boldneſs, the folly of attempts beyond our power, and the neceſſity of modeſt diffidence and cautious deliberation. Every page of every philoſopher is crouded with examples of temerity that ſunk under burthens which ſhe laid upon herſelf, and called out enemies to battle by whom ſhe was deſtroyed.

THEIR

These remarks are certainly too just to be disputed, and too salutary to be rejected; but there is likewise some danger lest timorous prudence should be too strongly inculcated, lest courage and enterprize should be wholly repressed, and the mind congealed in perpetual inactivity by the fatal influence of frigorifick wisdom.

Every man should, indeed, carefully compare his force with his undertaking; for though we ought not to live only for our own sakes, or act with regard solely to our own advantage, and though therefore danger or difficulty should not be avoided merely because we may expose ourselves to misery or disgrace; yet it may be justly required of us, not to hazard our lives, or throw away our labour, upon inadequate and hopeless designs, since we might by a more just estimate of our abilities have become more useful to mankind.

There is, doubtless, an irrational contempt of danger which approaches very nearly to the folly, if not the guilt, of suicide: there is a ridiculous perseverance in impracticable

double falsehood, which is justly punished with ignominy and reproach. But in the wide regions of probability which are the proper province of prudence and election, there is always room to deviate on either side of rectitude without falling against apparent absurdity; and according to the inclinations of nature, or the impressions of precept, the daring and the cautious may move in different directions without touching upon rashness or cowardice.

THAT there is a middle path which it is every man's duty to find, and to observe, is unanimously confessed; but it is likewise universally acknowledged that this middle path is so narrow, that it cannot easily be discovered, and so little beaten that there are no certain marks by which it can be followed; the care therefore of all those who have undertaken conduct others has been, that whenever they decline into obliquities, they should be certain to tend towards the side of safety.

IT can, indeed, raise no wonder that temerity has been generally censured; for it is one of the vices with which few can be charged, and which therefore great numbers are ready

study to contemn. It is the vice of noble and generous minds, the exuberance of magnanimity, and the ebullition of genius; and is therefore not regarded with much tenderness, because it never flatters us by that appearance of softness and imbecillity which is commonly necessary to conciliate compassion. But if the same attention had been applied to the search of arguments against cold despondency, against the mean and cowardly dereliction of ourselves, and the folly of presupposing impossibilities, and anticipating frustration, I know not whether many would not have been roused to usefulness, who, having been taught to confound prudence with timidity, never ventured to excel lest they should unfortunately fail.

It is always necessary to distinguish our own interest from that of others, and that distinction will perhaps assist us in fixing the just limits of caution and adventurousness. In an undertaking that involves the happiness, or the safety of many, we have certainly no right to hazard more than is allowed by those who partake the dangers; but where only ourselves can suffer by miscarriage, we are not confined

confined within ſuch narrow limits; and ſtill leſs is the reproach of temerity, when mankind will receive advantage by ſucceſs, and only one be incommoded by failure.

Many are generally willing to hear precepts by which eaſe is favoured; and as our reſentment is raiſed by general repreſentations of human folly, even in thoſe who are moſt eminently jealous of comparative reputation, we confeſs, without reluctance, that vain man is ignorant of his own weakneſs, and therefore frequently preſumes to attempt what he can never accompliſh; but it ought likewiſe to be remembered, that he is no leſs ignorant of his own powers, and might perhaps have accompliſhed a thouſand deſigns, which the prejudices of cowardice reſtrained him from attempting.

It is obſerved in the golden verſes of *Pythagoras*, that *Power is never far from neceſſity*. The vigour of the human mind quickly appears, when there is no longer any place for doubt and heſitation, when diffidence is abſorbed in the ſenſe of danger or overwhelmed by ſome reſiſtleſs paſſion. We then

ſoon

from discover, that difficulty is, for the most part, the daughter of Idleness, that the obstacles with which our way seemed to be obstructed were only phantoms, which we believed real because we durst not advance to a close examination; and we learn that it is impossible to determine without experience how much constancy may endure, or diligence perform.

But whatever pleasure may be found in the review of difficulties which art or courage has surmounted them, few will be persuaded to wish that they may be awakened by want or terror to the conviction of their own abilities. Every one should therefore endeavour to invigorate himself by reason and reflection, and determine to exert, in any laudable undertaking, the latent force that nature may have repofited in him against the hour of exigence, before external compulsion shall torture him to diligence. It is below the dignity of a reasonable being to owe that strength to necessity which ought always to act at the call of choice, or to need any other motive to industry and perseverance than the desire of performing the duties of his condition.

REFLECTIONS

Reflections that may at leaſt drive away deſpair, cannot eaſily be wanting to him who has taken a ſurvey of the world, and conſidered how much life is now advanced beyond the ſtate of naked, undiſciplined, uninſtructed nature. Whatever has been effected for convenience or elegance, while it was yet unknown, was believed impoſſible; and therefore would never have been attempted, had not ſome, more daring than the reſt, adventured to bid defiance to prejudice and cenſure. Nor is there yet any reaſon to doubt that the ſame labour would be rewarded with the ſame ſucceſs. There are certainly innumerable qualities in the productions of nature yet undiſcovered, and innumerable combinations in the powers of art yet untried. It is the duty of every man to endeavour that ſomething may be added by his induſtry to the hereditary aggregate of knowledge and happineſs. To add much can indeed be the lot of few, but to add ſomething, however little, every one may hope; and of every honeſt endeavour it is certain, that, however unſucceſsful, it will be at laſt rewarded.

Numb.

NUMB. 130. SATURDAY, *June* 15, 1751.

Non sic prata novo vere decentia
Æstatis calidæ dispoliat vapor,
Sævit solstitio cum medius dies; ——
Ut fulgor teneris qui radiat genis
Momento rapitur, nullaque non dies
Formosi spolium corporis abstulit.
Res est forma fugax. Quis sapiens bono
Confidat fragili? SENECA.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

YOU have very lately observed that in the numerous subdivisions of the world, every class and order of mankind have joys and sorrows of their own; we all feel hourly pain and pleasure from events which pass unheeded before other eyes, but can scarcely communicate our perceptions to minds preoccupied by different objects, any more than the delight of well disposed colours or harmonious

sounds

sounds can be imparted to such as want the senses of hearing or of sight.

I AM so strongly convinced of the justness of this remark, and have on so many occasions discovered with how little attention pride looks upon calamity of which she thinks herself not in danger, and indolence listens to complaint when it is not echoed by her own remembrance, that though I am about to lay the occurrences of my life before you, I question whether you will condescend to peruse my narrative, or without the help of some female speculatist be able to understand it.

I WAS born a beauty. From the dawn of reason I had my regard turned wholly upon myself, nor can recollect any thing earlier than praise and admiration. My mother, whose face had luckily advanced her to a condition above her birth, thought no evil so great as deformity. She had not the power of imagining any other defect than a cloudy complexion, or disproportionate features; and therefore contemplated me as an assemblage of all that could raise envy or desire, and predicted with

triumphant fondness the extent of my conquests, and the number of my slaves.

She never mentioned any of my young acquaintance before me, but to remark how much they fell below my perfection; how one would have had a fine face but that her eyes were without lustre; how another struck the sight at a distance, but wanted my hair and teeth at a nearer view; another disgraced an elegant shape with a brown skin; some had short fingers, and others had dimples in a wrong place.

As she expected no happiness nor advantage but from beauty, she thought nothing but beauty worthy of her care; and her maternal kindness was chiefly exercised in contrivances to protect me from any accident that might deface me with a scar, or stain me with a freckle: she never thought me sufficiently shaded from the sun, or screened from the fire. She was severe or indulgent with no other intention than the preservation of my form; she excused me from work, lest I should learn to hang down my head, or harden my finger with a needle; she snatched away my book, because

because a young lady in the neighbourhood had made her eyes red with reading by a candle; but she would scarcely suffer me to eat, lest I should spoil my shape, nor to walk, lest I should swell my ancle with a sprain. At night I was accurately surveyed from head to foot, lest I should have suffered any diminution of my charms in the adventures of the day; and was never permitted to sleep, till I had passed through the cosmetick discipline, part of which was a regular lustration performed with bean-flower water and maydews; my hair was perfumed with variety of unguents, by some of which it was to be thickened, and by others to be curled. The softness of my hands was secured by medicated gloves, and my bosom rubbed with a pomade prepared by my mother, of virtue to discuss pimples, and clear discolorations.

I was always called up early, because the morning air gives a freshness to the cheeks; but I was placed behind a curtain in my mother's chamber, because the neck is easily tanned by the rising sun. I was then dressed with a thousand precautions, and again heard my own praises, and triumphed in the compli-

ments and prognostications of all that approached me.

My mother was not so much prepossessed with an opinion of my natural excellencies as not to think some cultivation necessary to their completion. She took care that I should want none of the accomplishments included in female education, or considered as necessary in fashionable life. I was looked upon in my ninth year as the chief ornament of the dancing-master's ball, and Mr. *Arist* used to reproach his other scholars with my performances on the harpsichord. At twelve I was remarkable for playing my cards with great elegance of manner, and accuracy of judgment.

At last the time came when my mother thought me perfect in my exercises, and qualified to display in the open world those accomplishments which had yet only been discovered in select parties, or domestic assemblies. Preparations were therefore made for my appearance on a publick night, which she considered as the most important and critical moment of my life. She cannot be charged

charged with neglecting any means of recommendation, or leaving any thing to chance which prudence could ascertain. Every ornament was tried in every position, every friend was consulted about the colour of my dress, and the manteaumakers were harassed with directions and alterations.

At last the night arrived from which my future life was to be reckoned. I was dressed and sent out to conquer, with a heart beating like that of an old knight errant at his first tilly. Scholars have told me of a *Spartan* matron, who, when she armed her son for battle, bade him bring back his shield or be brought upon it. My venerable parent dismissed me to a field, in her opinion of equal glory, with a command to shew that I was her daughter, and not to return without a lover.

I went, and was received like other pleasing novelties with a tumult of applause. Every man who valued himself upon the graces of his person, or the elegance of his address, crouded about me, and wit and splendor contended for my notice. I was delightfully fatigued with incessant civilities, which were made

more pleaſing by the apparent envy of thoſe whom my preſence expoſed to neglect. I returned with an attendant equal in rank and wealth to my utmoſt wiſhes, and from this time ſtood in the firſt rank of beauty, was followed by gazers in the mall, celebrated in the papers of the day, imitated by all who endeavoured to riſe into faſhion, and cenſured by thoſe whom age or diſappointment forced to retire.

My mother, who pleaſed herſelf with the hopes of ſeeing my exaltation, dreſſed me with all the exuberance of finery; and when I repreſented to her that a fortune might be expected proportionate to my appearance, told me that ſhe ſhould ſcorn the reptile who could enquire after the fortune of a girl like me. She adviſed me to proſecute my victories, and time would certainly bring me a captive who might deſerve the honour of being enchained for ever.

My lovers were indeed ſo numerous, that I had no other care than that of determining to whom I ſhould ſeem to give the preference. But having been ſteadily and induſtriouſly

early instructed to preserve my heart from any impressions which might hinder me from consulting my interest, I acted with less embarrassment, because my choice was regulated by principles more clear and certain than the caprice of approbation. When I had singled out one from the rest as more worthy of encouragement, I proceeded in my measures by the rules of art; and yet when the ardour of the first visits was spent, generally found a sudden declension of my influence; I felt in myself the want of some power to diversify amusement, and enliven conversation, and could not but suspect that my mind failed in performing the promises of my face. This opinion was soon confirmed by one of my lovers, who married *Lavinia* with less beauty and fortune than mine, because he thought a wife ought to have qualities which might make her amiable when her bloom was past.

The vanity of my mother would not suffer her to discover any defect in one that had been formed by her instructions, and had all the excellence which she herself could boast. She told me that nothing so much hindered the

advancement of women in literature and love, which generally frightened away those that could make the beſt ſettlements, and drew about them a needy tribe of poets and philoſophers, that filled their heads with wild notions of content, and contemplation, and virtuous obſcurity. She therefore enjoined me to improve my minuet ſtep with a new *French* dancing-maſter, and wait the event of the next birth-night.

I HAD now almoſt completed my nineteenth year: if my charms had loſt any of their ſoftneſs, it was more than compenſated by additional dignity; and if the attractions of innocence were impaired, their place was ſupplied by the arts of allurement. I was therefore preparing for a new attack, without any abatement of my confidence, when in the midſt of my hopes and ſchemes, I was ſeized by that dreadful malady which has ſo often put a ſudden end to the tyranny of beauty. I recovered my health after a long confinement; but when I looked again on that face which had been often flushed with tranſport at its own reflexion, and ſaw all that I had learned to value, all that I had endeavoured to improve,

improve, all that had procured me honours or praise, irrecoverably destroyed, I sunk at once into melancholy and despondence. My pain was not much consoled or alleviated by my mother, who grieved that I had not lost my life together with my beauty, and declared, that she thought a young woman divested of her charms had nothing for which those who loved her could desire to save her from the grave.

HAVING thus continued my relation to the period from which my life took a new course, I shall conclude it in another letter, if by publishing this you shew any regard for the correspondence of,

Sir, &c.

VICTORIA.

NUMB. 131. TUESDAY, *June* 18, 1751.

—— Fatis accede deisque,
Et cole felices; miseros fuge. Sidera cœlo
Ut distant, et flamma mari, sic utile recto.

LUCAN.

THERE is scarcely any sentiment in which, amidst the innumerable varieties of inclination that nature or accident have scattered in the world, we find greater numbers concurring than in the wish for riches; a wish indeed so prevalent that it may be considered as universal and transcendental, as the desire in which all other desires are included, and of which the various purposes which actuate mankind are only subordinate species and different modifications.

WEALTH is indeed the general center of inclination, the point to which all minds preserve an invariable tendency, and from which they afterwards diverge in numberless directions.

ſtions. Whatever is the remote or ultimate deſign, the immediate care is to be rich; and in whatever enjoyment we intend finally to acquieſce, we ſeldom conſider it as attainable but by the means of money. Of wealth therefore all unanimouſly confeſs the value, nor is there any diſagreement but about the uſe.

No deſire can be formed which riches do not aſſiſt us to gratify. He that places his happineſs in ſplendid equipage or numerous dependents, in refined praiſe or popular acclamations, in the accumulation of curioſities or the revels of luxury, in ſplendid edifices or wide plantations, muſt ſtill either by birth or acquiſition poſſeſs riches. They may be conſidered as the elemental principles of pleaſure, which may be combined with endleſs diverſity; as the eſſential and neceſſary ſubſtance, of which only the form is left to be adjuſted by choice.

The neceſſity of riches being thus apparent, it is not wonderful that almoſt every mind has been employed in endeavours to acquire them; that multitudes have vied with each other in arts by which life is furniſhed

with accommodations, and which therefore mankind may reasonably be expected to reward.

It had indeed been happy, if this predominant appetite had operated only in concurrence with virtue, by influencing none but those who were zealous to deserve what they were eager to possess, and had abilities to improve their own fortunes by contributing to the ease or happiness of others. To have riches and to have merit would then have been the same, and success might reasonably have been considered as a proof of excellence.

But we do not find that any of the wishes of men keep a stated proportion to their powers of attainment. Many envy and desire wealth, who can never procure it by honest industry or useful knowledge. They therefore turn their eyes about to examine what other methods can be found of gaining that which none, however impotent or worthless, will be content to want.

A little enquiry will discover that there are nearer ways to profit than through the intricacies

[illegible] of art, or up the [illegible] of labour; that what wisdom and virtue [illegible] at the close of life, as the recompence of long toil and repeated efforts, is brought within the reach of subtilty and dishonesty by more expeditious and compendious measures: that the wealth of credulity is an open prey to falsehood; and that the possessions of ignorance and imbecillity are easily stolen away by the conveyances of secret artifice, or seized by the gripe of unresisted violence.

It is likewise not hard to discover, that riches always procure protection for themselves, that they dazzle the eyes of enquiry, divert the celerity of pursuit, or appease the ferocity of vengeance. When any man is incontestably known to have large possessions, very few think it requisite to enquire by what practices they were obtained; the resentment of mankind rages only against the struggles of feeble and timorous corruption, but when it has surmounted the first opposition, it is afterwards supported by favour, and animated by applause.

The prospect of gaining speedily what is ardently

ambitiously defired, and the certainty of obtaining by every acceſſion of advantage an additional ſecurity, have ſo far prevailed upon the paſſions of mankind, that the peace of life is deſtroyed by a general and inceſſant ſtruggle for riches. It is obſerved of gold, by an old epigrammatiſt, that *to have it is to be in fear, and to want it is to be in ſorrow.* There is no condition which is not diſquieted either with the care of gaining or of keeping money; and the race of man may be divided in a political eſtimate between thoſe who are practiſing fraud, and thoſe who are repelling it.

If we conſider the preſent ſtate of the world, it will be found, that all confidence is loſt among mankind, that no man ventures to act where money can be endangered, upon the faith of another. It is impoſſible to ſee the long ſcrolls in which every contract is included, with all their appendages of ſeals and atteſtation, without wondering at the depravity of thoſe beings, who muſt be reſtrained from violation of promiſe by ſuch formal and publick evidences, and precluded from equivocation and ſubterfuge by ſuch punctilious minuteneſs. Among all the ſatires to which folly

folly and wickedneſs have given occaſion, there is equally ſevere with a bond or a fetter-ment.

Of the various arts by which riches may be obtained, the greater part are at the firſt view irreconcileable with the laws of virtue; ſome are openly flagitious, and practiſed not only in neglect, but in defiance of faith and juſtice; and the reſt are on every ſide ſo entangled with dubious tendencies, and ſo beſet with perpetual temptations, that very few, even of thoſe who are not yet abandoned, are able to preſerve their innocence, or can produce any other claim to pardon than that they have deviated from the right leſs than others, and have ſooner and more diligently endeavoured to return.

One of the chief characteriſticks of the golden age, of the age in which neither care nor danger had intruded on mankind, is the community of poſſeſſions: ſtrife and fraud were totally excluded, and every turbulent paſſion was ſtilled, by plenty and equality. Such were indeed happy times, but ſuch times can return no more. Community of poſſeſ-

ſion

ſion muſt always include ſpontaneity of production; for what is only to be obtained by labour, muſt be of right the property of him by whoſe labour it is gained. And while a rightful claim to pleaſure or to affluence muſt be procured either by ſlow induſtry or uncertain hazard, there will always be multitudes whom cowardice or impatience will incite to more ſafe and more ſpeedy methods, who will ſtrive to pluck the fruit without cultivating the tree, and to ſhare the advantages of victory without partaking the danger of the battle.

In later ages, the conviction of the danger to which virtue is expoſed while the mind continues open to the influence of riches, has determined many to vows of perpetual poverty; they have ſuppreſſed deſire by cutting off the poſſibility of gratification, and ſecured their peace by deſtroying the enemy whom they had no hope of reducing to quiet ſubjection. But by debarring themſelves from evil, they have reſtrained many opportunities of good; they have too often ſunk into inactivity and uſeleſſneſs; and though they have forborn to injure ſociety, have not fully paid their contributions to its happineſs.

WHILE riches are so necessary to present convenience, and so much more easily obtained by crimes than virtues, the mind can only be secured from yielding to the continual impulse of covetousness by the preponderation of unchangeable and eternal motives. Gold will generally turn the intellectual balance, when weighed only against reputation; but will be light and ineffectual when the opposite scale is charged with justice, veracity, and piety.

NUMB. 132. SATURDAY, *June* 22, 1751.

——— *Dociles imitandis*
Turpibus ac pravis omnes sumus.——
JUV.

To the RAMBLER.

Mr. RAMBLER,

I Was bred a scholar, and having passed the usual course of education at least with common proficiency and credit, I found it necessary to employ for the support of life that learning which I had almost exhausted my little fortune in acquiring. The lucrative professions drew my regard with equal attraction: each had its peculiar advantages and inconveniences; each presented ideas which excited my curiosity, and each imposed duties which terrified my apprehension.

THERE is no temper more unpropitious to interest than desultory application and unlimited

limited enquiry, by which the desires are held in a perpetual equipoise, and the mind fluctuates between different purposes without determination. I had books of every kind round me, among which I divided my time as caprice or accident directed. I often spent the first hours of the day, in considering to what study I should devote the rest; and at last when I was harassed with deliberation, snatched up any author that lay upon the table, or perhaps, fled to a coffee-house for deliverance from the anxiety of irresolution, and the gloominess of solitude. But, when my attention happened to be vigorous, and my intellects unclouded, I ranged from art to art, from writer to writer, and have distributed a single hour among *Chrysostom*, *Galen*, *Homer*, *Euclid*, and *Justinian*.

In the mean time my little patrimony grew imperceptibly less till I was at last roused from my literary slumber by the impatience of a creditor, whose importunity obliged me to pacify him with so large a sum that what remained was not sufficient to support me more than eight months. I hope you will not reproach me with avarice or cowardice

if

if I acknowledge that I now thought myself in danger of diſtreſs, and obliged to endeavour after ſome certain competence.

There have been heroes of negligence, who have laid the price of their laſt acre in a drawer, and, without the leaſt interruption of their tranquillity or abatement of their expences, taken out one piece after another, till there was no more remaining. But I was not born to ſuch dignity of imprudence, or ſuch exaltation above the cares and neceſſities of life: I therefore immediately engaged my friends to procure me a little employment, which might ſet me free from the dread of poverty, and afford me time to plan out ſome final ſcheme of laſting advantage.

My friends, whoſe kindneſs had never riſen into much ſolicitude, and who had neither inclination nor opportunity to know the ſtate of my revenues, were ſtruck with honeſt perturbation at the confeſſion of my uneaſineſs, and immediately promiſed their endeavours for my extrication. They did not ſuffer their kindneſs to languiſh by delay, but in the firſt ardour of their zeal proſecuted their enquiries with

with ſuch ſucceſs, that in leſs than a month I was perplexed with variety of offers and contrariety of proſpects.

I HAD however no time for long pauſes of conſideration; and therefore ſoon reſolved to accept the office of inſtructing a young nobleman in the houſe of his father: I went to the ſeat at which the family then happened to reſide, was received with great politeneſs, and invited to enter immediately on my charge. The terms offered were ſuch as I ſhould willingly have accepted, though my circumſtances had allowed me greater liberty of choice: the reſpect with which I was treated flattered my vanity; and perhaps, the ſplendor of the apartments, and the luxury of the table, were not wholly without their influence. I immediately complied with the propoſals, and received the young lord into my care.

HAVING no deſire to gain more than I ſhould truly deſerve, I very diligently proſecuted my undertaking, and had the ſatisfaction of diſcovering in my pupil a flexible temper, a quick apprehenſion, and a retentive memory.

memory. I did not much doubt that my care would, in time, produce a wife and useful counſellor to the ſtate, though my labours were ſomewhat obſtructed by want of authority, and the neceſſity of complying with the freaks of negligence, and of waiting patiently for the lucky moment of voluntary attention. To a man, whoſe imagination was filled with the dignity of knowledge, and to whom a ſtudious life had made all the common amuſements inſipid and contemptible, it was not very eaſy to ſuppreſs his indignation, when he ſaw himſelf forſaken in the midſt of his lecture, for an opportunity to catch an inſect, and found his inſtructions debarred from acceſs to the intellectual faculties by the memory of a childiſh frolick, or the deſire of a new plaything.

Thoſe vexations, however, would have recurred leſs frequently, had not his mamma, by entreating at one time that he ſhould be excuſed from his taſk as a reward for ſome petty compliance, and with-holding him from his book at another to gratify herſelf or her viſitants with his vivacity, ſhewn him that every thing was more pleaſing and more important

than knowledge, and that ſtudy was to be endured rather than choſen, and was only the buſineſs of thoſe hours which pleaſure left vacant, or diſcipline uſurped.

I THOUGHT it my duty to complain, in tender terms, of theſe frequent avocations; but was anſwered, that rank and fortune might reaſonably hope for ſome indulgence; that the retardation of my pupil's progreſs would not be imputed to any negligence or inability of mine; and that with the ſucceſs which ſatisfied every body elſe, I might ſurely ſatisfy myſelf. I had now done my duty, and without more remonſtrances, continued to inculcate my precepts whenever they would be heard, gained every day new influence, and found that by degrees my ſcholar began to feel the quick impulſes of curioſity, and the honeſt ardour of ſtudious ambition.

AT length it was reſolved to paſs a winter in *London*. The lady had too much fondneſs for her ſon to live five months without him, and too high an opinion of his wit and learning to refuſe her vanity the gratification of exhibiting him to the publick. I remonſtrated againſt

against too early an acquaintance with cards and company; but with a soft contempt of my ignorance and pedantry, she said that he had been already confined too long to solitary study, and it was now time to shew him the world; that nothing was more a brand of [illegible] than bashful timidity; that gay freedom and elegant assurance were only to be gained by mixed conversation, a frequent intercourse with strangers, and a timely introduction to splendid assemblies; and she had more than once observed, that his forwardness and complaisance began to desert him, that he was silent when he had not something of consequence to say, blushed whenever he happened to find himself mistaken, and hung down his head in the presence of ladies, without that readiness of reply and activity of officiousness remarkable in young gentlemen that are bred in *London*.

Again I found resistance hopeless, and again therefore I thought it proper to comply. We entered the coach, and in four days were placed in the gayest and most magnificent region of the town. My pupil, who had for several years lived at a remote seat,

was

was immediately dazzled with a thouſand beams of novelty and ſhew. His imagination was filled with the perpetual tumult of pleaſure that paſſed before him, and it was impoſſible to allure him from the window, or to overpower by any charm of eloquence the rattle of coaches, and the ſounds which echoed from the doors in the neighbourhood. In three days his attention, which he began to regain, was diſturbed by a rich ſuit, in which he was equipped for the reception of company, and which, having been long accuſtomed to a plain dreſs, he could not at firſt ſurvey without ecſtaſy.

The arrival of the family was now formally notified; every hour of every day brought more intimate or more diſtant acquaintance to the door; and my pupil was indiſcriminately introduced to all, that he might accuſtom himſelf to change of faces, and be rid with ſpeed of his ruſtick diffidence. He has eaſily endeared himſelf to his mother by the ſpeedy acquiſition or recovery of her darling qualities; his eyes ſparkle at a numerous aſſembly, and his heart dances at the mention of a ball. He has at once caught the

infection of high life, and has no other teſt of principles or actions than the quality of thoſe to whom they are aſcribed. He begins already to look down on me with ſuperiority, and ſubmits to one ſhort leſſon in a week, as an act of condeſcenſion rather than obedience, for he is of opinion, that no tutor is properly qualified who cannot ſpeak *French*; and having formerly learned a few familiar phraſes from his ſiſter's governeſs, he is every day ſoliciting his mamma to procure him a foreign footman, that he may grow polite by his converſation. I am yet not inſulted, but find myſelf likely to become ſoon a ſuperfluous incumbrance, for my ſcholar has now no time for ſcience, or for virtue; and the lady yeſterday declared him ſo much the favourite of every company, that ſhe was afraid he would not have an hour in the day to dance and fence.

I am, &c.

EUMATHES.

NUMB. 133. TUESDAY, *June* 25, 1751.

Magna quidem ſacris quæ dat præcepta libellis
Victrix fortunæ ſapientia. Dicimus autem
Hos quoque felices, qui ferre incommoda vitæ,
Nec jactare jugum, vitâ didicere magiſtrâ.

JUV.

To the RAMBLER.

SIR,

YOU have ſhewn by the publication of my letter, that you think the life of *Victoria* not wholly unworthy of the notice of a philoſopher: I ſhall therefore continue my narrative, without any apology for unimportance which you have dignified, or for inaccuracies which you are to correct.

WHEN my life appeared to be no longer in danger, and as much of my ſtrength was recovered as enabled me to bear the agitation of a coach, I was placed at a lodging in a neighbouring village, to which my mother diſmiſſed

me with a faint embrace, having repeated her command not to expose my face too soon to the sun or wind, and told me, that with care I might perhaps become tolerable again. The prospect of being tolerable had very little power to elevate the imagination of one who had so long been accustomed to praise and ecstacy; but it was some satisfaction to be separated from my mother, who was incessantly ringing the knell of departed beauty, and never entered my room without the whine of condolence, or the growl of anger. She often wandered over my face, as travellers over the ruins of a celebrated city, to note every place which had once been remarkable for a happy feature. She condescended to visit my retirement, but always left me more melancholy; for after a thousand trifling enquiries about my diet, and a minute examination of my looks, she generally concluded with a sigh that I should never more be fit to be seen.

At last I was permitted to return home, but found no great improvement of my condition; for I was imprisoned in my chamber as a criminal, whose appearance would disgrace my friends, and condemned to be tortured

mired into new beauty. Every experiment which the officiouſneſs of folly could communicate, or the credulity of ignorance believe, was tried upon me. Sometimes I was covered with emollients, by which it was expected that all the ſcars would be filled, and my cheeks plumped up to their former ſmoothneſs; and ſometimes I was puniſhed with artificial excoriations, in hopes of gaining new graces with a new ſkin. The coſmetick ſcience was exhauſted upon me; but who can repair the ruins of nature? My mother was forced to give me reſt at laſt, and abandon me to the fate of a fallen toaſt, whoſe fortune ſhe conſidered as a hopeleſs game, no longer worthy of ſolicitude or attention.

The condition of a young woman who has never thought or heard of any other excellence than beauty, and whom the ſudden blaſt of diſeaſe wrinkles in her bloom, is, indeed, ſufficiently calamitous. She is at once deprived of all that gave her eminence or power; of all that elated her pride, or animated her activity; all that filled her days with pleaſure and her nights with hope; all that gave gladneſs to the preſent hour, or brightened her proſpects of

futurity. It is perhaps, not in the power of a man whoſe attention has been divided by diverſity of purſuits, and who has not been accuſtomed to derive from others much of his happineſs, to image to himſelf ſuch helpleſs deſtitution, ſuch diſmal inanity. Every object of pleaſing contemplation, is at once ſnatched away, and the ſoul finds every receptacle of ideas empty, or filled only with the memory of joys that can return no more. All is gloomy privation, or impotent deſire; the faculties of anticipation ſlumber in deſpondency, or the powers of pleaſure mutiny for employment.

I WAS ſo little able to find entertainment for myſelf, that I was forced in a ſhort time to venture abroad, as the ſolitary ſavage is driven by hunger from his cavern. I entered with all the humility of diſgrace into aſſemblies, where I had lately ſparkled with gaiety, and towered with triumph. I was not wholly without hope, that dejection had miſrepreſented me to myſelf, and that the remains of my former face might yet have ſome attraction and influence: But the firſt circle of viſits convinced me, that my reign was at an end; that

that life and death were no longer in my hands; that I was no more to practiſe the glance of command, or the frown of prohibition, to receive the tribute of ſighs and praiſes, or be ſoothed with the gentle murmurs of amorous timidity. My opinion was now unheard, and my propoſals were unregarded; the narrowneſs of my knowledge, and the meanneſs of my ſentiments, were eaſily diſcovered, when the eyes were no longer engaged againſt the judgment; and it was obſerved, by thoſe who had formerly been charmed with my vivacious loquacity, that my underſtanding was impaired as well as my face, and that I was no longer qualified to fill a place in any company but a party at cards.

It is ſcarcely to be imagined how ſoon the mind ſinks to a level with the condition. I, who had long conſidered all who approached me as vaſſals condemned to regulate their pleaſures by my eyes, and haraſs their inventions for my entertainment, was in leſs than three weeks reduced to receive a ticket with profeſſions of obligation; to catch with eagerneſs at a compliment; and to watch with all the anxiouſneſs of dependance, leſt any little

civility that was paid me ſhould paſs unacknowledged.

THOUGH the negligence of the men was not very pleaſing when compared with vows and adoration, yet it was far more ſupportable than the inſolence of my own ſex. For the firſt ten months after my return into the world, I never entered a ſingle houſe in which the memory of my downfal was not revived. At one place I was congratulated on my eſcape with life; at another I heard of the benefits of early inoculation; by ſome I have been told in expreſs terms, that I am yet not without my charms; others have whiſpered at my entrance, This is the celebrated beauty. One told me of a waſh that would ſmooth the ſkin; and another offered me her chair that I might not front the light. Some ſoothed me with the obſervation that none can tell how ſoon my caſe may be her own; and ſome thought it proper to receive me with mournful tenderneſs, formal condolence, and conſolatory blandiſhments.

THUS was I every day haraſſed with all the ſtratagems of well-bred malignity; yet inſolence

lence was more tolerable than ſolitude, and I therefore perſiſted to keep my time at the doors of my acquaintance, without gratifying them with any appearance of reſentment or depreſſion. I expected that their exultation would in time vapour away; that the joy of their ſuperiority would end with its novelty; and that I ſhould be ſuffered to glide along in my preſent form among the nameleſs multitude whom nature never intended to excite envy or admiration, nor enabled to delight the eye or inflame the heart.

THIS was naturally to be expected, and this I began to experience. But when I was no longer agitated by the perpetual ardour of reſiſtance and effort of perſeverance, I found more ſenſibly the want of thoſe entertainments which had formerly delighted me; the day roſe upon me without an engagement, and the evening cloſed in its natural gloom, without ſummoning me to a concert or a ball. None had any care to find amuſements for me, and I had no power of amuſing myſelf. Idleneſs expoſed me to melancholy, and life began to languiſh in motionleſs indifference.

Misery and ſhame are nearly allied. It was not without many ſtruggles that I prevailed on myſelf to confeſs my uneaſineſs to *Euphemia*, the only friend who had never pained me with comfort or with pity. I at laſt laid my calamities before her, rather to eaſe my heart than receive aſſiſtance. "We "muſt diſtinguiſh, ſaid ſhe, my *Victoria*, "thoſe evils which are impoſed by provi- "dence, from thoſe to which we ourſelves "give the power of hurting us. Of your "calamity, a ſmall part is the infliction of "heaven, the reſt is little more than the cor- "roſion of idle diſcontent. You have loſt "that which may indeed ſometimes contri- "bute to happineſs, but to which happineſs "is by no means inſeparably annexed. You "have loſt what the greater number of the "human race never have poſſeſſed; what thoſe "on whom it is beſtowed for the moſt part "poſſeſs in vain; and what you, while it was "yours, knew not how to uſe: You have "only loſt early what the laws of nature for- "bid you to keep long, and have loſt it while "your mind is yet flexible, and while you "have time to ſubſtitute more valuable and

"more

"more durable excellencies. Consider your-
"self, my *Victoria*, as a being born to know,
"to reason, and to act; rise at once from
"your dream of melancholy to wisdom and
"to piety; you will find that there are other
"charms than those of beauty, and other joys
"than the praise of fools."

I am, Sir, &c.

VICTORIA.

NUMB. 134. SATURDAY, *June* 29, 1751.

Quis ſcit, an adjiciant hodiernæ craſtina ſummæ
Tempora Di ſuperi?

HOR.

I Sat yeſterday morning employed in deliberating on which, among the various ſubjects that occurred to my imagination, I ſhould beſtow the paper of to-day. After a ſhort effort of meditation which by nothing was determined, I grew every moment more irreſolute, my ideas wandered from the firſt intention, and I rather wiſhed to think, than thought, upon any ſettled ſubject; till at laſt I was awakened from this dream of ſtudy by a ſummons from the preſs: the time was come for which I had been thus negligently purpoſing to provide, and, however dubious or ſluggiſh, I was now neceſſitated to write.

THOUGH to a writer whoſe deſign is ſo com-

comprehenſive and miſcellaneous, that he may accommodate himſelf with a topick from every ſcene of life, or view of nature, it is no great aggravation of his taſk to be obliged to a ſudden compoſition, yet I could not forbear to reproach myſelf for having ſo long neglected what was unavoidably to be done, and of which every moment's idleneſs increaſed the difficulty. There was however ſome pleaſure in reflecting that I, who had only trifled till diligence was neceſſary, might ſtill congratulate myſelf upon my ſuperiority to multitudes, who have trifled till diligence is vain; who can by no degree of activity or reſolution recover the opportunities which have ſlipped away; and who are condemned by their own careleſneſs to hopeleſs calamity and barren ſorrow.

THE folly of allowing ourſelves to delay what we know cannot be finally eſcaped, is one of the general weakneſſes, which in ſpite of the inſtruction of moraliſts, and the remonſtrances of reaſon, prevail to a greater or leſs degree in almoſt every mind: even they who moſt ſteadily withſtand it, find it, if not the moſt violent, the moſt pertinacious of their paſſions,

passions, always renewing its attacks, and though often vanquished, never destroyed.

It is indeed natural to have particular regard to the time present, and to be most solicitous for that which is by its nearness enabled to make the strongest impressions. When therefore any sharp pain is to be suffered, or any formidable danger to be incurred, we can scarcely exempt ourselves wholly from the seducements of imagination; we readily believe that another day will bring some support or advantage which we now want; and are easily persuaded, that the moment of necessity which we desire never to arrive, is at a great distance from us.

Thus life is languished away in the gloom of anxiety, and consumed in collecting resolution which the next morning dissipates; in forming purposes which we scarcely hope to keep; and reconciling ourselves to our own cowardice by excuses, which, while we admit them, we know to be absurd. Our firmness is by the continual contemplation of misery hourly impaired; every submission to our fear enlarges its dominion; we not only waste

that

that time in which the evil we dread might have been suffered and surmounted, but even where procrastination produces no absolute encrease of our difficulties, make them less superable to ourselves by habitual terrors. When evils cannot be avoided, it is wise to contract the interval of expectation; to meet the mischiefs which will overtake us if we fly; and suffer only their real malignity without the conflicts of doubt and anguish of anticipation.

To act is far easier than to suffer, yet we every day see the progress of life retarded by the *vis inertiæ*, the mere repugnance to motion, and find multitudes repining at the want of that which nothing but idleness hinders them from enjoying. The case of *Tantalus*, in the region of poetick punishment, was somewhat to be pitied, because the fruits that hung about him retired from his hand; but what tenderness can be claimed by those who though perhaps they suffer the pains of *Tantalus* will never lift their hands for their own relief?

There is nothing more common among this

this torpid generation than murmurs and complaints; murmurs at uneaſineſs which only vacancy and ſuſpicion expoſe them to feel, and complaints of diſtreſſes which it is in their own power to remove. Lazineſs is commonly aſſociated with timidity. Either fear originally prohibits endeavours by infuſing deſpair of ſucceſs; or the frequent failure of irreſolute ſtruggles, and the conſtant deſire of avoiding labour, impreſs by degrees falſe terrors on the mind. But fear, whether natural or acquired, when once it has full poſſeſſion of the fancy never fails to employ it upon viſions of calamity, ſuch as if they are not ſoon diſſipated by uſeful employment, will ſoon overcaſt it with horrors, and imbitter life not only with thoſe miſeries by which all earthly beings are really more or leſs tormented, but with thoſe which do not yet exiſt, and which can only be diſcerned by the perſpicacity of cowardice.

Among all who ſacrifice future advantage to preſent inclination, ſcarcely any gain ſo little as thoſe that ſuffer themſelves to freeze in idleneſs. Others are corrupted by ſome enjoyment of more or leſs power to gratify

gratify the paſſions; but to neglect our duties, merely to avoid the labour of performing them, a labour which is always punctually rewarded, is ſurely to ſink under weak temptations. Idleneſs never can ſecure tranquillity; the call of reaſon and of conſcience will pierce the cloſeſt pavilion of the ſluggard, and, though it may not have force to drive him from his down, will be loud enough to hinder him from ſleep. Thoſe moments which he cannot reſolve to make uſeful by devoting them to the great buſineſs of his being, will ſtill be uſurped by powers that will not leave them to his diſpoſal; remorſe and vexation will ſeize upon them, and forbid him to enjoy what he is ſo deſirous to appropriate.

THERE are other cauſes of inactivity incident to more active faculties and more acute diſcernment. He to whom many objects of purſuit ariſe at the ſame time, will frequently heſitate between different deſires, till a rival has precluded him, or change his courſe as new attractions prevail, and haraſs himſelf without advancing. He who ſees different ways to the ſame end, will, unleſs he watches

watches carefully over his own conduct, lay out too much of his attention upon the comparison of probabilities, and the adjustment of expedients, and pause in the choice of his road, till some accident intercepts his journey. He whose penetration extends to remote consequences, and who, whenever he applies his attention to any design, discovers new prospects of advantage, and new possibilities of improvement, will not easily be persuaded that his project is ripe for execution; but will superadd one contrivance to another, endeavour to unite various purposes in one operation, multiply complications, and refine niceties, till he is entangled in his own scheme, and bewildered in the perplexity of various intentions. He will resolve to unite all the beauties of situation in a new purchase, and waste his life in roving to no purpose from province to province. He will hope in the same house to obtain every convenience, and draw plans and study *Palladio*, but never lay a stone. He will attempt a treatise on some important subject, and amass materials, consult authors, and study all the dependent and collateral parts of learning, but never conclude himself qualified to write. He that has

abilities

abilities to conceive perfection, will not eaſily be content without it; and ſince perfection cannot be reached, will loſe the opportunity of doing well in the vain hope of unattainable excellence.

THE certainty that life cannot be long, and the probability that it will be much ſhorter than nature allows, ought to awaken every man to the active proſecution of whatever he is deſirous to perform. It is true that no diligence can aſcertain ſucceſs; death may intercept the ſwifteſt career; but he who is cut off in the execution of an honeſt undertaking, has at leaſt the honour of falling in his rank, and has fought the battle, though he miſſed the victory.

NUMB. 135. TUESDAY, *July* 2, 1751.

Cælum, non animum mutant.

HOR.

IT is impoſſible to take a view on any ſide, or obſerve any of the various claſſes that form the great community of the world, without diſcovering ſome proof of the influence of example; and admitting with new conviction and in a ſenſe more extenſive the obſervation of *Ariſtotle*, that *man is an imitative being*. The greater, far the greater, number follow the track which others have beaten, without any curioſity after new diſcoveries, or ambition of truſting themſelves to their own conduct. And, of thoſe whom the confidence of juvenile temerity incites to break the ranks and diſorder the uniformity of the march, moſt return in a ſhort time from their deviation, and prefer the equal and ſteady ſatisfaction of ſecurity before the frolicks of caprice and the honours of adventure.

IN

In queſtions difficult or dangerous it is indeed natural to repoſe upon authority, and, when fear happens to predominate, upon the authority of thoſe whom we do not in general think wiſer than ourſelves. Very few have abilities requiſite for the diſcovery of abſtruſe truth; and of thoſe few ſome want leiſure and ſome reſolution, ſome are drawn off from the ſearch by buſineſs or amuſements, and ſome retire at the appearance of difficulty. But it is not ſo eaſy to find the reaſon of the univerſal ſubmiſſion to precedent where every man might ſafely judge for himſelf; where no irreparable loſs can be hazarded, nor any miſchief of long continuance incurred. Vanity might be expected to operate on thoſe who are not reſtrained by any more powerful paſſion; the mere pleaſure of acknowledging no ſuperior might ſometimes produce ſlight ſingularities, or the hope of gaining ſome new degree of happineſs awaken the mind to invention or experiment.

If in any caſe the ſhackles of preſcription could be wholly ſhaken off, and the imagination left to act without controul, on what occaſion

casion should it be expected, but in the selection of lawful pleasure? Pleasure, of which the essence is choice; which compulsion dissolutes from every thing to which nature has united it; and which owes not only its vigour but its being to the smiles of liberty. Yet we see that the senses, as well as the reason, are regulated by credulity; and that most will feel, or say that they feel, the gratifications which others have taught them to expect.

At this time of universal migration, when almost every one, considerable enough to attract regard, has retired, or is preparing with all the earnestness of distress to retire, into the country; when nothing is to be heard but the hopes of speedy departure, or the complaints of involuntary delay; I have often been tempted to enquire what happiness to be gained, or what inconvenience to be avoided, by this general recession. Of the birds of passage, some follow the summer, and some the winter, because they live upon sustenance which only summer or winter can supply; but of the annual flight of human rovers it is much harder to assign the reason, because they do not appear either to find or seek any thing which

is

is not equally afforded by the town and country.

I BELIEVE, that many of theſe fugitives may have heard of men whoſe continual wiſh was for the quiet of retirement, who watched every opportunity to ſteal away from obſervation, to forſake the croud, and delight themſelves with *the ſociety of ſolitude*. There is indeed ſcarcely any writer who has not celebrated the happineſs of rural privacy, and delighted himſelf and his reader with the melody of birds, the whiſper of groves, and the murmur of rivulets; nor any man eminent for extent of capacity, or greatneſs of exploits that has not left behind him ſome memorials of lonely wiſdom, and ſilent dignity.

BUT almoſt all abſurdity of conduct ariſes from the imitation of thoſe whom we cannot reſemble. Thoſe who thus teſtified their wearineſs of tumult and hurry, and haſted with ſo much eagerneſs to the leiſure of retreat, were either men overwhelmed with the preſſure of difficult employments, harraſſed with importunities, and diſtracted with multiplicity; or men wholly engroſſed by ſpecula-

lative

lative sciences, who having no other end of life but to learn and teach, found their searches interrupted by the common commerce of civility, and their reasonings disjointed by frequent interruptions. Such men might reasonably fly to that ease and convenience which their condition allowed them to find only in the country. The statesman who devoted the greater part of his time to the publick, was desirous of keeping the remainder in his own power; the general ruffled with dangers, wearied with labours, and stunned with acclamations, gladly snatched an interval of silence and relaxation; the naturalist was unhappy where the works of providence were not always before him; the reasoner could adjust his systems only where his mind was free from the intrusion of outward objects.

Such examples of solitude very few of those who are now hastening from the town, have any pretensions to plead in their own justification, since they cannot pretend either weariness of labour, or desire of knowledge. They purpose nothing more than to quit one scene of idleness for another, and after having trifled in publick to sleep in secrecy. The utmost

utmoſt that they can hope to gain is the change of ridiculouſneſs to obſcurity, and the privilege of having fewer witneſſes to a life of folly. He who is not ſufficiently important to be diſturbed in his purſuits, but ſpends all his hours according to his own inclination, and has more hours than his mental faculties enable him to fill either with enjoyment or deſires, can have nothing to demand of ſhades and valleys. As bravery is ſaid to be a panoply, inſignificancy is always a ſhelter.

THERE are however pleaſures and advantages in a rural ſituation, which are not confined to philoſophers and heroes. The freſhneſs of the air, the verdure of the woods, the paint of the meadows, and the unexhauſted variety which ſummer ſcatters upon the earth, may eaſily give delight to an unlearned ſpectator. It is not neceſſary that he who looks with pleaſure on the colours of a flower ſhould ſtudy the principles of vegetation, or that the *Ptolemaick* and *Copernican* ſyſtem ſhould be compared before the light of the ſun can gladden, or its warmth invigorate. Novelty is itſelf a ſource of gratification, and *Milton* juſtly obſerves, that to him who has been long

pent up in cities no rural object can be presented, which will not gladden ſome of his ſenſes with refreſhment.

YET even theſe eaſy pleaſures are miſſed by the greater part of thoſe who waſte their ſummer in the country. Should any man purſue his acquaintances to their retreats, he would find few of them liſtening to *Philomel*, loitering in woods, or plucking daiſies, catching the healthy gale of the morning, or watching the gentle coruſcations of declining day. Some will be diſcovered at a window by the road ſide, rejoicing when a new cloud of duſt gathers towards them, as at the approach of a momentary ſupply of converſation, and a ſhort relief from the tedioufneſs of unideal vacancy. Others are placed in the adjacent villages, where they look only upon houſes as in the reſt of the year, with no change of objects but what a remove to any new ſtreet in *London* might have given them. The ſame ſet of acquaintances ſtill ſettle together, and the form of life is not otherwiſe diverſified than by doing the ſame things in a different place. They pay and receive viſits in the uſual form, they frequent the walks in the morning,

morning, they deal cards at night, they attend to the ſame tattle, and dance with the ſame partners; nor can they at their return to their former habitation congratulate themſelves on any other advantage, than that they have paſſed their time like others of the ſame rank; and have the ſame right to talk of the happineſs and beauty of the country, of happineſs which they never felt, and beauty which they never regarded.

To be able to procure its own entertainments, and to ſubſiſt upon its own ſtock, is not the prerogative of every mind. There are indeed underſtandings ſo fertile and comprehenſive, that they can always feed reflection with new ſupplies, and ſuffer nothing from the preclusion of adventitious amuſements; as ſome cities have within their own walls encloſed ground enough to feed their inhabitants in a ſiege. But others live only from day to day, and muſt be conſtantly enabled, by foreign ſupplies, to keep out the encroachments of languor and ſtupidity. Such could not indeed be blamed for hovering within reach of their uſual pleaſures, more than any other animal for not quitting its native element,

were not their faculties contracted by their own fault. But let not those who go into the country, merely because they dare not be left alone at home, boast their love of nature, or their qualifications for solitude; nor pretend that they receive instantaneous infusions of wisdom from the *Dryads*, and are able, when they leave smoke and noise behind, to act, or think, or reason for themselves.

NUMB. 136. SATURDAY, *July* 16, 1751.

Ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοι κοῖνος ὁμῶς ἀΐδαο πύλῃσιν,
Ὅς χ' ἕτερον μὲν κεύθει ἐνὶ φρεσὶν, ἄλλο δὲ βάζει.
HOM.

THE regard which they whose abilities are employed in the works of imagination claim from the rest of mankind arises in a great measure from their influence on futurity. Rank may be conferred by princes, and wealth bequeathed by misers or by robbers; but the honours of a lasting name and a title to the veneration of distant ages only the sons of learning have the power of bestowing.

ing. While therefore the love of fame is a motive of action, while it continues one of the characteristicks of rational nature to decline oblivion, authors never can be wholly overlooked in the search after happiness, nor become contemptible but by their own fault.

The man who considers himself as constituted the ultimate judge of disputable characters, as entrusted with the distribution of the last terrestrial rewards of merit, ought surely to summon all his fortitude to the support of his integrity, and resolve to discharge an office of such dignity and importance with the most vigilant caution and scrupulous justice. To deliver examples to posterity, and to regulate the opinion of future times, is no slight or trivial undertaking; nor is it easy to commit more atrocious treason against the great republick of humanity, than by falsifying its records and misguiding its decrees.

To scatter praise or blame without regard to justice, is to destroy the distinction of good and evil. Many have no other test of actions than general opinion; and all are so far influ-

enced by a ſenſe of reputation, that they are often reſtrained by fear of reproach, and excited by hope of honour, when other principles have loſt their power; nor can any ſpecies of proſtitution promote general depravity more than that which deſtroys the value of praiſe, by ſhewing that it may be acquired without deſerving it, and, which by ſetting free the active and ambitious who muſt always determine the fate of others, from the dread of infamy, lets looſe the rapacity of power, and weakens the only authority by which greatneſs is controlled.

PRAISE, like gold and diamonds, owes its value only to its ſcarcity. It muſt become cheap as it becomes vulgar, and will no longer raiſe expectation, or animate enterprize. It is therefore not only neceſſary, that wickedneſs, even when it is not ſafe to cenſure it, be denied applauſe, but that goodneſs be commended only in proportion to its degree; and that the garlands, due to the great benefactors of mankind, be not ſuffered to fade upon the brow of him who can boaſt only petty ſervices and eaſy virtues.

HAD theſe maxims been univerſally received,

ceived how much would have been added to the taſk of dedication, the work on which all the power of modern wit has been exhauſted. How few of theſe initial panegyricks had appeared, if the author had been obliged firſt to find a man of virtue, then to know the diſtinct ſpecies and degree of his deſert, and at laſt to pay him only the honours which he might juſtly claim. It is much eaſier to learn the name of the laſt man whom chance has exalted to wealth and power, to obtain by the intervention of ſome of his domeſticks the privilege of addreſſing him, or to venture on an addreſs without any previous ſolicitation in confidence of the general acceptance of flattery; and after having heaped upon him all the virtues to which philoſophy has aſſigned a name, inform him how much more might be truly ſaid, did not the fear of giving pain to his modeſty repreſs the raptures of wonder and the zeal of veneration.

NOTHING has ſo much degraded literature from its natural rank, as the practice of indecent and promiſcuous dedication; for what credit can he expect who profeſſes himſelf the hireling of vanity, however profligate, and

and without ſhame or ſcruple celebrates the worthleſs, dignifies the mean, and gives to the corrupt licentious and oppreſſive the ornaments which ought only to add grace to truth and lovelineſs to innocence? Every other kind of fraud or adulteration, however ſhameful, however miſchievous, is certainly far leſs deteſtable than the crime of counterfeiting characters, and fixing the ſtamp of literary ſanction, upon the droſs and refuſe of the world.

I WOULD not, yet overwhelm the authors with the whole load of infamy, of which part, perhaps the greater part, ought to fall upon their patrons. If he that hires a bravo partakes the guilt of murder, why ſhould he who bribes a flatterer hope to be exempted from the ſhame of falſhood? The unhappy dedicator is ſeldom without ſome motives which obſtruct, though not deſtroy the liberty of choice; he is perhaps oppreſſed by miſeries which he hopes to relieve, or inflamed by ambition which he expects to gratify. But the patron has no incitements equally violent; he can receive only a ſhort gratification, with which nothing but ſtupidity could

diſpoſe

diſpoſe him to be pleaſed. The real ſatisfaction which praiſe can afford is by repeating aloud the whiſpers of conſcience, and by ſhewing us that we have not endeavoured to deſerve well in vain. Every other encomium is, to an intelligent mind, ſatire and reproach; the celebration of theſe virtues which we feel ourſelves to want, can only impreſs a quicker ſenſe of our own defects, and ſhew that we have not yet ſatisfied the expectations of the world, by forcing us to obſerve how much fiction muſt contribute to the completion of our character.

YET perhaps the patron himſelf may have ſome claim to indulgence; for it does not always happen, that the encomiaſt has been much encouraged to his attempt. Many a hapleſs author, when his book, and perhaps his dedication, was ready for the preſs, has waited long before any one would pay the price of proſtitution, or conſent to hear the praiſes deſtined to inſure his name againſt the caſualties of time; and many a complaint has been vented againſt the decline of learning, and neglect of genius, when either parſimonious prudence has declined

closed expence, or honeſt indignation rejected falſhood. But if at laſt, after long enquiry and innumerable diſappointments, he finds a lord willing to hear of his own eloquence and taſte, a ſtateſman deſirous of knowing how a friendly hiſtorian will repreſent his conduct, or a lady delighted to leave to the world ſome memorial of her wit and beauty, ſuch weakneſs cannot be cenſured as an inſtance of enormous depravity. It can ſcarcely be expected but the wiſeſt man may by a diligent ſolicitor be ſurpriſed in the hour of weakneſs, and perſuaded to ſolace vexation, or invigorate hope with the muſick of flattery.

To cenſure all dedications as adulatory and ſervile, would diſcover rather envy than juſtice. Praiſe is the tribute of merit, and he that has inconteſtably diſtinguiſhed himſelf by any publick performance, has a right to all the honours which the publick can beſtow. To men thus raiſed above the reſt of the community, there is no need that the book or its author ſhould have any particular relation: that the patron is known to deſerve reſpect, is ſufficient to vindicate him that pays it. To the ſame regard from particular perſons pri-

vate

with virtue and leſs conſpicuous excellence may be ſometimes entitled. An author may with great propriety inſcribe his work to him by whoſe encouragement it was undertaken, or by whoſe liberality he has been enabled to proſecute it; and may juſtly rejoice in his own fortitude when he dares to reſcue merit from obſcurity.

Acribus exemplis videor te cludere: miſce
Ergo aliquid noſtris de moribus.——

I know not whether greater relaxation may not be indulged, and whether hope as well as gratitude may not unblameably produce a dedication; but let the writer who pours out his praiſes only to propitiate power, or attract the attention of greatneſs, be cautious leſt his deſire betray him to exuberant eulogies. We are naturally more apt to pleaſe ourſelves with the future than the paſt, and while we luxuriate in expectation, may be eaſily perſuaded to purchaſe what we yet rate only by imagination, at a higher price than experience will warrant.

But no private views or perſonal regard can diſcharge any man from his general obligations

guilt to virtue and to truth. It may happen in the various combinations of life that a good man may receive favours from one who, notwithſtanding his accidental beneficence, cannot be juſtly propoſed to the imitation of others, and whom, therefore, he muſt find ſome other way of rewarding than by publick celebrations. Self-love has indeed many powers of ſeducement, but it ſurely ought not to exalt us to equality with the collective body of mankind, or perſuade us that a benefit conferred on us is equivalent to every other virtue. Yet many upon falſe principles of gratitude have ventured to extol wretches whom all but their dependents numbered among the reproaches of the ſpecies, and whom they would likewiſe have beheld with the ſame ſcorn had they not been hired to diſhoneſt approbation.

To encourage merit with praiſe is the great buſineſs of literature; but praiſe muſt loſe its influence, by unjuſt or negligent diſtribution; and he that impairs its value may be charged with miſapplication of the power that genius puts into his hands, and with ſquandering on guilt the recompence of virtue.

END of VOL. IV.